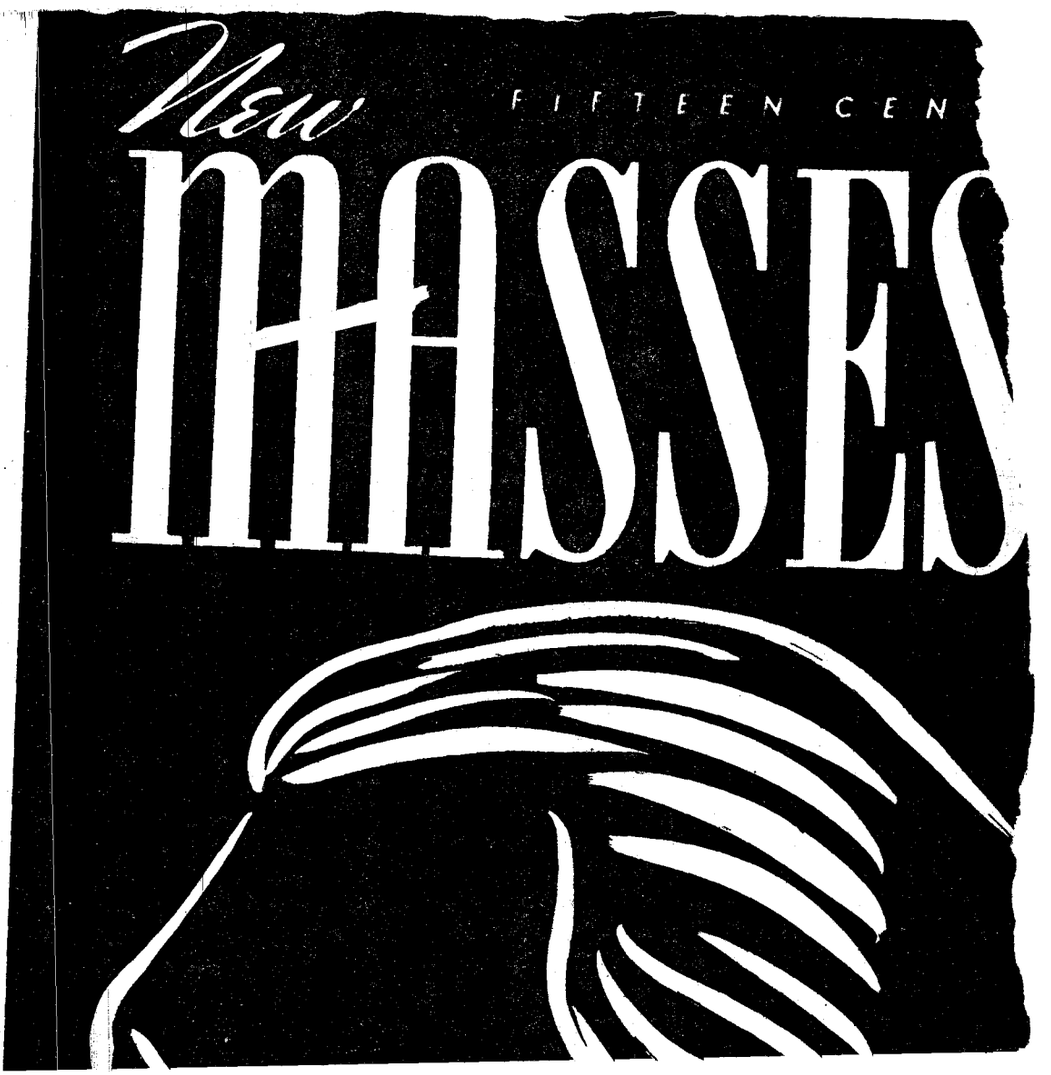
IS IT WAR?
AN EDITORIAL

Unity for Peace
EARL BROWDER

British Labor vs. Hitler
JOSEPH NORTH

Copperhead O'Connor
RUTH McKENNEY



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this issue Ruth McKenney, ıor of the best-seller, *My leen,* joins the staff of NEW ās one of the editors. Joshua ‹ and Bruce Minton leave us arily to start work on new both will continue as contrib- editors. Another of our con- ıg editors will be William er. James Dugan, Barbara and Richard H. Rovere, whose has appeared frequently in pages, become associate editors. will publish in an early an article by Hy Kravif ng with the latest development ıe technique of reactionary propa- da, what has been called "po- ɔo-business" advertising. This l be followed by an article by ɔrge Corey on one of the chief tuosi of politico-business advertis- g, Don Francisco, new president of rd & Thomas, second largest ad- rtising firm in the country. Un- ıual short stories by Naomi Mitchi- n and Lillian Hellman are also heduled for early issues.

Also to appear in early issues are roup of verses on Spain, by Vin- t Sheean, and an article on the nging political scene in Cuba, Obed Brooks.

heodore Draper, NEW MASSES ign editor, will speak for the ladelphia People's Forum at Mu- ans' Hall, 120 North 18th St., ladelphia, on Sunday, September , at 8:15 p.m. Mr. Draper will talk current developments in the zechoslovakian-Nazi situation.

A. B. Magil, NEW MASSES editor ıose new book, *The Peril of ıscism: The Crisis of American De- ocracy,* written in collaboration th Henry Stevens, has received uch favorable comment, is launch- g his campaign this week as Com- unist candidate for Congress from e Seventeenth District, Manhattan. he present incumbent is Bruce ton.

he presentation of *American cument,* Martha Graham's dance tal sponsored by NEW MASSES, ich was originally scheduled r the Center Theatre, will take ace at Carnegie Hall instead. he date, October 9, remains the me. Advance information on this nce is that it injects a new element theater into what was once en- ely a concert art; specific dramatic les are played throughout except t the characterizations are in vement rather than in speech. For kets and reservations please call iba Garlin at CAledonia 5-3076. urther details are given on page 24 this issue.

Several NEW MASSES artists were nong those who set up their asels in New York City's Times Square, Columbus Circle, and Union Square, on September 14, and paint- ed posters illustrating various themes the needs of the American Relief p to Spain. The plan was pro- ted by Art Young, who took part such a "posters in public" project uring the World War. Included in e list of artists that worked on the anish-relief paintings were Rock- ell Kent, William Gropper, Fred lis, Soriano, John Groth, Philip vergood, Abe Birnbaum, Harry

Between Ourselves

Gottlieb, Sidney Hoff, and Mas- saguer, newspaper cartoonist of the Hines trial. The posters will be on exhibition after September 22, at a place to be announced later.

Another affair, for the Spanish Children's Milk Fund, will take place on the evening of November 21 when W. C. Handy, composer of *St. Louis Blues* and *Loveless Love,* early jazz classics, will conduct an orchestra in Carnegie Hall in a program of American Negro music.

Who's Who

ROBERT STARK is an economist and the author of the article, "Japan Fights the Boycott," which appeared in the February 15 NEW MASSES. . . . Joseph North covered the British Trades Union Congress for the *Daily Worker* and NEW MASSES. . . . Corliss Lamont is a member of the editorial board of *Soviet Russia Today,* and is the editor of an anthology of poetry, *Man Answers Death.* . . . Maxwell Bodenheim, whose name has long been familiar to NEW MASSES readers, is the author of many novels and books of poetry. . . . Louis B. Boudin is an authority on constitutional law and American history. . . . Marc Frank will be remembered as the author of several recent NEW MASSES articles about Mexico; he is our correspondent in that country. . . . William Blake, lecturer and writer on economics, is the author of the recently published novel, *The World Is Mine.* . . . Shaemas O'Sheel is a well known writer and literary critic. . . . Marjorie Brace has frequently contributed book reviews to NEW MASSES. . . . Marcia Minor is a newspaper feature writer.

THIS WEEK

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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Flashbacks

JUST two years ago this department made its first appearance. For 104 weeks Flashbacks has rescued fragments of working-class history from academic limbo, and now we have a request to make. Will you lend a hand in the editing of this column for the coming year? If you are a member of a trade union whose important milestones have been ignored in Flashbacks, will you help us correct this oversight? If Negro history is your hobby, or the Chinese Red Army, or early trade unions, or the biographies of revolutionary leaders, will you send us a list of dates? If you are a proletarian antiquarian will you send us notes on events out of the progressive past, memory of which you would like to see kept alive? . . . Some dates are chronic, or should be, and if Flashbacks has ignored any such, will you let us know? Hundreds of famous first times in labor history have not yet been celebrated in this column. Will you nominate your favorite "firsts"? You may recall important or characteristic moments in the lives of labor's past heroes, knowledge of which would enrich labor's present. Or dates marking political adventures, or crises or advances which Marxists must be alert enough to winnow from the bourgeois historical chaff. . . . In other words send in dates, dates, dates, and with your dates be careful to tell where more information about them can be found. . . . And don't wait until the week before your pet anniversary is due. Start confessing your chronological crotchets in the next mail.

Perhaps the most significant anniversary for the coming week is that of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, which began just seven years ago on September 18. In New York, on September 17, a mass picket line will be thrown around the Japanese consulate, an action which will be duplicated in all democratic countries where Japanese consulates are located. The New York demonstration will have a particular significance in view of the recent arrival in San Francisco, aboard the *Tadsuda Maru,* of the Japanese munitions mission consisting of Major Gen. S. Haseba, Lieut. T. Nakamura, and Prof. Y. Watanabe.

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Sofiano

Is It War?

A Plan for the Maintenance of World Peace

AN EDITORIAL

THE world faces war.

As we go to press, the Czech government, rejecting the Henlein ultimatum demanding annihilation of Czech national sovereignty, prepares to defend itself against German invasion.

So the game is played and the last card lies on the table. Fascism has inexorably led Europe toward war. Step by step, the German monopolists and their hysterical pawns, Hitler and Goering, abetted by the criminal policy of the Chamberlain government, and buoyed up by Mussolini, have marched the people of the world into the shadow of catastrophe.

And this need not have happened. These soldiers, marching as we write, need never have marched. The Soviet Union's peace policy gave leadership to the nations of the world. When the Chamberlain government ignored the Soviet plea for a united stand of democracies for peace, it prepared the ground for war.

The menace to Czechoslovakia originated on the shores of the Red Sea when Mussolini invaded Ethiopia; gathered momentum when Italian and German fascists invaded Spain; grew closer and closer as Japanese legions overran China and German troops marched across the Austrian border. Now fascism has unmistakably challenged world democracy to open combat.

This need not have happened! Consider the tragedy of those words. It need not have been. Now that it is upon us, we in America who love peace and love democracy, take stock. The failure to implement a true, unflinching policy of collective security has led to disaster in Europe. And from this we have much to learn.

In this hour of danger to all that Americans hold dear, we dare not repeat the mistakes of the past. It is only too clear that democracy is on trial, that democracy is threatened with obliteration. The American tradition and American security demand that we distinguish between the aggressor and the transgressed, between the bully and the victim, between the tyrant and the republican. In Europe today, the bully and the tyrant are the fascists. They have defied the conscience of the world. They have proclaimed that everything Americans believe in—liberty, democracy, freedom of religion, the rights of minorities, human dignity itself—shall perish from the earth.

We mean to stay out of war, but we cannot be falsely neutral. We cannot be indifferent. A word from the United States may be all that is needed to tip the scales in favor of peace. *Let the President invoke the Kellogg pact and declare that any attack on Czechoslovakia is a direct concern of the people and government of the United States. Let him make clear to the fascist dictators that this country is prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder with Britain, France, and the Soviet Union, not in behalf of any suicidal Chamberlain "appeasement" policy that merely whets the appetite of the aggressors, but in the active defense of peace and the independence of all nations.*

There can be no place for a false Neutrality Act, a Neutrality Act that comforts the fascists. We who believe in and live by democracy can now show our devotion to the principles on which our own state rests, by supporting those principles wherever they are challenged. Democracy in Spain has been menaced by fascism; it is now overwhelmingly clear to the American people that the so-called Neutrality Act was an aid to the aggressors and a penalty to the Spanish people fighting for their liberty and independence.

We say to the democracies that we will

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William Gropper

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give no comfort to the fascist aggressors. We say to them that we will aid them in their life-and-death struggle by refusing to extend credits to or trade with the aggressors, while we offer the victims the aid of our immense economic strength.

Nor will this be merely a gesture of generosity. It will be hard-headed realism. For aid to the democracies in their fight against fascist aggression is a blow against those who would destroy our own democracy. And even more, support of the democracies will prevent war.

The policy of the United States must be the policy of peace. The way to isolate this nation from war is to isolate the forces that provoke war. It is nearly a year since President Roosevelt made his famous Chicago speech urging concerted action by peace-loving nations to quarantine the aggressors. Though precious time has been lost, it is not yet too late for the United States to participate in collective action. Such action is now imperative.

And the necessity of defending our own democracy has never been more urgent. Against fascism workers, farmers, liberals, middle-class people, professionals, all progressive Americans must present a democratic front, stronger, broader, firmer than ever before.

The coming elections offer the American people the opportunity and the responsibility to express their determination to prevent reaction and fascism from gaining strength here. Now more than ever before, the resolve to defeat the opponents of progress and democracy must express itself in the defeat of those who block recovery and the President's program.

For, in the next months, the foreign policy of America will be vital not only to the people of this country but to the people of the world. The elections must express the temper of the masses. The elections will show clearly that the American people believe in democracy and in the defense of democracy. By defending it at home we are defending it abroad.

Today is not 1914. We dare not be misled into imagining that because some newspapers read hauntingly like paragraphs from World War history books, we are in an analogous situation. The attempt of fascism to destroy democracy is *real*. The existence of a powerful organized working-class in the United States and England and of the Popular Front in France is *real*. The strong Communist Parties in the great democracies are *real*. Above all, the very existence of the Soviet Union, the Socialist nation, undying enemy of oppression and inequality, is a reality that gives strength and new hope to the forces of peace and democracy throughout the world.

The people of the United States have a fateful choice. We can choose to hide our eyes —and give comfort to the fascist aggressors.

Or we can choose to support the democratic peoples of Europe.

This way lies peace.

Unity for Peace

The Peoples of the Americas Against World Fascism

EARL BROWDER

With the world balanced on the precipice of war, the people of the United States and those of all American countries are finally crystallizing their position against the fascist warmaking powers. All subterfuges to evade the issue have been smashed by Hitler's violent demand for the unconditional surrender of Czechoslovakia and thereby of world democracy, backed up by the greatest mobilization ever witnessed in what is still technically "peacetime." World democracy is choosing between the alternatives: "Unite or surrender."

The carefully guarded but nonetheless clear calls of President Roosevelt for world unity of the democratic forces, have encouraged and strengthened the forces of peace everywhere. Together with the unequivocal and positive peace policy of the Soviet Union, implemented from day to day by Maxim Litvinov and backed by the will of 180,000,000 strong, united Soviet people, led by Joseph Stalin, this presents the hope for world peace around which are rallying all the peace forces of the world.

It is on this background that we must evaluate the speech of John L. Lewis on September 11, at the International Congress Against War and Fascism meeting in Mexico City. With this background the speech emerges as one of the great, really historic utterances in the present tragic moment of world history.

"We meet here," declared Lewis, "to give common expression to our purpose of preservation of democratic institutions against the menace of interests who want to destroy them. Democracy has always had its enemies. Now they have organized themselves under the black flag of fascism. . . . Between us and fascism there can be no peace. We join hands with all other workers in this hemisphere and the whole world to fight against our common enemy."

In these words spoke the conscience and will of American Labor. Lewis emerged, with this speech, not merely as the greatest American trade-union leader, not only as one of the most potent representatives of American democracy, but as a leader of world democracy. American labor takes its rightful position in the vanguard of the world struggle against fascism and war.

Leon Jouhaux, head of the Confederation of Labor of France, spoke from the same platform with Lewis and in the same terms, on behalf of the great united labor movement of his land—the backbone and sinews of the *Front Populaire* which snatched France from the jaws of fascism by uniting Radicals, Socialists, and Communists into a bloc of the majority of the people.

Ramon Gonzales Pena, of the United Labor Federation of Spain, and Minister of Justice in the Spanish republic, stood side by side with Lewis, representing a people which has been pouring out its blood in torrents for the same cause.

From almost all Latin American countries, the outstanding leaders of labor, the most able and trusted, were there to utter the same sentiments, to express the same determination, to make the same pledge.

Vicente Lombardo Toledano, head of the Mexican Confederation of Labor (CTM) and leader of the Mexican people, was the chief organizer of this historic gathering.

President Lázaro Cárdenas of Mexico welcomed the congress, and branded the fascist warmakers as the "avowed enemies of civilization." Ramon Gonzales Pena hailed Cárdenas as "the first President who declared before his Parliament that it is a legitimate undertaking to sell arms to the Spanish republic."

And fifty thousand Mexicans joined with the delegates, in the Stadium of Mexico City, to cheer this alliance of the American peoples for peace and democracy. Fifty million workers of the Americas will join with the same enthusiasm when the call reaches them sharply and clearly.

That is the task now, to carry the historic call of the International Congress and the historic words of John L. Lewis, to the broadest masses of the workers, farmers, and all the common people.

How pitifully bankrupt, how shamefully treasonable, are revealed the hysterical denunciations of William Green, who jabbered slanders against the congress in Mexico City in the jargon of Mr. Dies and the rest of the fascist Red-baiters. At the moment when Hitler threatens the whole world with slaughter and destruction, they can find nothing better to do than echo the slogans of the "Anti-Communist Alliance" of Hitler, Mussolini, and the Mikado.

The peoples of America are uniting with world democracy to halt once and for all the advance of fascism, to preserve peace and democracy.

Now we must emphasize a hundredfold that high aspirations are not enough, splendid words must be followed by deeds. *Unity for action!*

Unity for action means, first of all, the lifting of the criminal blockade from republican Spain. But it means more than that. It

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means help, serious, practical help, to the Spanish people. And first of all, it means that the United States must come forward to help feed the heroic but starving Spanish people. Our country has such a surplus of foodstuffs that its disposal has become an embarrassing problem. Send our surplus food to Spain!

Unity for action means, to stop the shameful traffic with Japanese imperialism in its murder of the Chinese people. An embargo against Japan must be laid, to be lifted only when the Japanese armies have retired from the Chinese republic!

Unity of the workers, unity of the peoples, unity of all the forces of democracy, within the United States and on an international scale—this is the slogan of the hour!

★

A Trotskyite Exposed

THE well known Croat journalist, Ivo Balkas, has written an article, published in No. 25 of *Nova Evropa,* a bourgeois-democratic magazine appearing in Zagreb (Yugoslavia), revealing the disgusting moral and political physiognomy of Ante Ciliga, the ringleader of the Yugoslav Trotskyites and one of the leaders of the so-called Paris Trotskyist Center. It is the same journal which since 1926 has published numerous articles by Ciliga full of slanderous attacks on the Soviet Union.

Last September Balkas openly accused Ciliga in the Zagreb journal *Culture* of being a paid agent of Italian fascism. Ciliga attempted to evade the issue and designated the accusations made against him as "slanders." Now Balkas, in the columns of *Nova Evropa,* cites the following facts.

In the first place Ciliga, in his reply, makes no attempt to refute my assertions that in February 1936, we met in a Paris cafe where he confessed to me the following: (1) That he owes his release from banishment to Siberia (where he was exiled on account of his counter-revolutionary Trotskyist activity by the Soviet power) to fascist Italy. (2) That the *Italian ambassador in Moscow* had repeatedly intervened on his behalf. (3) That the Rome government after the representations of the ambassador remained without result, directly approached the Moscow government and even threatened to resort to diplomatic reprisals.

In addition Ciliga did not dispute the fact that previous to that the Italian fascists had condemned him to death for having taken part in a revolt and for treason, and that the same Italian fascist authorities had now given him a passport enabling him to travel freely in Italy and abroad.

Proceeding from these facts, everybody may judge for himself whether my accusation can be designated as "slander." As is well known, the fascists have never spared their enemies. They destroy them even if they are abroad. Can we, therefore, consider the great concern of the Italian fascists for Ciliga as a normal phenomenon? Therefore I maintain again and again that Ciliga actually said to me in the above mentioned conversation: "Your arguments are not devoid of logic. You must, however, realize that my one object in life is *to damage the Soviet Union.*"

Balkas further declares that these facts can be confirmed by Ivo Maritch and other persons in Zagreb, Spalato, and Belgrade.—WORLD NEWS AND VIEWS, *No. 39.*

Copperhead O'Connor

Why Some of His Best Friends Are Republicans

RUTH McKENNEY

GOOD old John J. (Copperhead) O'Connor, that fine broth of a man from the sidewalks of New York's Sixteenth Congressional District, faces the September 20th Democratic and (surprise) Republican primaries with something less than his usual top o' the morning smile.

In fact, gloom hangs heavy around the O'Connor headquarters at swank Hotel Commodore. Even the yards of motheaten red, white, and blue bunting droop, and the beefy Tammany vote-catchers who sit moodily under the fine red, white, and blue posters with their astute slogan, "It's a Patriotic Duty to Reelect Congressman O'Connor," have the look of rats waiting for the "women and children first" call.

The goose distinctly does not hang high these brisk September days for poor old Honest John, chairman of the House Rules Committee, and Tammany's gift to Washington. For President Roosevelt is out a-hunting for Mr. O'Connor's scalp, and the voters of the faithful Sixteenth are showing signs of deserting their "favorite" son in his hour of great need.

The national administration not only put the finger on Mr. O'Connor in a famous press conference before the primary race began, but, adding insult to a very nasty injury, ploughed right into the election battle to support James H. Fay, his pro-New Deal opponent. Thus are rewarded fifteen years in the House of Representatives, fifteen years spent faithfully supporting the downtrodden power trust, the poor old corporation taxpayers, the maligned gentlemen of Wall Street, the hungry of Tammany Hall, and that fine old patriot, William Randolph Hearst.

Don't imagine, however, that Congressman O'Connor and his little friends have taken President Roosevelt's insults lying down. On the contrary. Col. Theodore Roosevelt, that embattled soldier of Wall Street, Congressman Ham Fish, Red-baiter when Dies was still in political knee-pants, Bruce Barton, who made Jesus into a hard-hitting, straight-from-the-shoulder salesman, and is currently trying to make the Republican Party a success, too,—they have all lined up to fight the good fight for Honest John O'Connor. Unfortunately, these worthies are all Republicans, which seemed a bit awkward in the beginning, as Congressman O'Connor had been a Democrat from way back, and tiger spots don't just wash off. But Colonel Roosevelt fixed all that. He led his old friend, Mr. O'Connor, into the Republican primaries with the gentle words, "Because you have refused to act as a rubber stamp, you have been singled out by the President for martyrdom. I hope you will receive the Republican endorsement. You merit it as a patriot."

Mr. Barton and Mr. Fish came across with equally passionate endorsements, and although there are some in Mr. Fay's headquarters who regard a Republican endorsement in the Sixteenth Congressional District as the veritable kiss of death, a Copperhead can't be too choosy. Mr. O'Connor fed the gift horse sugar and even hoped, once upon a time, to stand unopposed in the Republican primary. But the Republicans of the famous Sixteenth are few but proud, and hopelessly divorced from reality, the Union Club type. Mr. O'Connor wears loud ties and diamond stickpins, and his grammar is carefully bad in public, as befits a prince of Tammany Hall. In spite of Mr. Barton's and Colonel Roosevelt's pleas, the stubborn gentlemen from the Republican councils in the Sixteenth put up an old Alexander Hamilton boy and told O'Connor to go chase himself. The news leaked through, just too late, that the doughty congressman really has a fine aristocratic home in Bayport, and only just pretends to be loud and vulgar for the benefit of his constituents on the upper East Side. But by the time the Republicans found out O'Connor was a gentleman all the time, the die was cast. Next time, maybe.

Mr. O'Connor, while spending perhaps a bit too much time fiddling around with the six and a half Republicans in his long-famed Democratic bailiwick, has not, however, been concentrating entirely on the Park Avenue vote. His district runs from Fourteenth Street to Sixty-third Street, from Lexington Avenue to the East River—the home of the original *Dead End* street of the movie and play. Mr. O'Connor is more or less aware that his constituents are Irish and poor (75 percent) or Italian and poor, or Spanish and poor, but apparently he considers a more exact inquiry into their way of life esoteric. At least Mr. O'Connor has never bandied around the figures showing that his congressional district is tuberculosis-death headquarters for New York—in one part of the Sixteenth the tuberculosis death-rate is 1,000 percent greater than for any other part of the city. Nor has he shown much interest in the readily available housing figures for the congressional district he has represented for fifteen years. At least the *Congressional Record* shows no speech by Mr. O'Connor citing the dismal record that his constituents set in

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New York City—one-third of the dwellings in the district old-law tenements, 90 percent of the houses in one part of the district built before 1900, and eleven thousand people living in these 404 buildings. In fact, even Mr. O'Connor's campaign speeches overlook the infant-mortality rate (scandalously high), the number of unemployed, the need for WPA.

For Mr. O'Connor feeds his constituents on stronger meat than piddling old promises about housing or WPA or other such newfangled notions.

"President Roosevelt," Mr. O'Connor recently thundered, with just the hint of a brogue, "is a would-be dictator. What's the difference between Franklin Roosevelt and Adolf Hitler? They both want the same thing."

Naturally piqued at the President's flat statement that John J. O'Connor must be defeated in the interests of a progressive America, our hero swung hard on his reply: "The 'purge' is the escalator to dictatorship. The so-called mandate from the people is the natural successor to the divine right of kings."

This last was a nice overtone, addressed to the king-hating Irishmen of the district. Unfortunately for Mr. O'Connor, his opponent also has a slight brogue, rather more genuine than Mr. O'Connor's, and Mr. Fay's Irish ancestry is every bit as pure as the congressman's.

And to make matters worse, much worse, that mean Irishman, Mr. Fay, is running for office on Mr. O'Connor's record—all fifteen years of it. "Case History of a Copperhead," they call it around Fay campaign headquarters, or "How I paid for my Long Island home out of the hides of the voters on East Side New York."

The story begins, at least in Mr. O'Connor's campaign interviews, in the usual poor-but-honest style. Our John was of the Boston Irish variety, worked his way through college playing professional football, got a scholarship to Harvard Law School and emerged with an LL.D., a smart young Irishman ready for anything. All roads for smart young Irishmen led to New York in those lush pre-war days and the name of O'Connor soon amounted to something in Tammany circles. The way of a ward-heeler is slow and painful, but by 1923 O'Connor was ready to reap the rewards of being "regular" for the past decade. A grateful machine bundled him off to Washington.

Mr. O'Connor's salad days in Congress were marked by what Tammany felt was a deplorable skittishness. He was all the time trying to run things himself, once going so far as to challenge the authority of the Tammany whip in the House of Representatives. Voters in the Sixteenth need not, however, imagine that Honest John was bucking the machine for the good of the dear old people. On the contrary. It seemed that Mr. O'Connor wanted to be the Tammany whip himself. The Sachems at Fourteenth Street slapped Mr. O'Connor down for his pains, and threatened

Mischa Richter

"I refuse to be a rubber stamp for the New Deal!"

that papa spank if he didn't behave. He behaved.

But by 1932 Mr. O'Connor had settled down. By this time the mantle of Tammany authority had fallen on his shoulders as a matter of course, and to make things even prettier, Mr. O'Connor had ridden the Roosevelt bandwagon early. The administration trusted him, the machine was all his, what could be sweeter? Mr. O'Connor was awarded the fattest plum of the House of Representatives—the chairmanship of the House Rules Committee.

Now for all the innocent, who imagine that legislation in the lower house of the national Congress is initiated by a legislator, acted upon by a committee of experts in the field, and then voted upon by the assembled representatives, we will take a sentence off to break the news of the harsh reality. Long years of machine politics have served to make getting a decent piece of legislation even before the House of Representatives for consideration the world's most ticklish job. Acres of special rules, bales of precedents, the most complicated parliamentary procedure in the world, all serve to gum things up. But beyond all these details stands the House Rules Committee, which acts as a bottleneck for all House legislation.

And the cork of the bottleneck is Mr. John J. O'Connor, the honorable gentleman from New York.

Mr. O'Connor, as chairman of the House Rules Committee, can and does play the most engaging game of false-face politics in America. He can fight a piece of New Deal legislation inside the secret meetings of his committee, tooth and nail. Then, if the bill does get out on the floor of Congress, by petition, he can cast his mealy-mouthed vote for the common people, Roosevelt, and God. Who will play tattle-tale and let the voters of the Sixteenth Congressional District know that their John fought the Wages-and-Hours Bill for two entire sessions of Congress, with deadly success, until at long last it saw the light of day on the floor of Congress and he cast his reluctant vote for it?

The gentleman from New York usually has two techniques for New Deal legislation—the boa-constrictor treatment, or the slow-poison act. The boa-constrictor (or quick-strangulation) approach is rather crude, but fundamental. Mr. O'Connor simply sits on all the legislation he doesn't like, until its backers in the House have to petition it out of the Rules Committee. Naturally a petition takes some doing and New Deal congressmen can't waste their political battles on more minor matters. So lots of important but not crucial legislation goes down to an unsung death at Mr. O'Connor's hands.

The slow-poison method is more subtle, but pretty deadly all the same. Mr. O'Connor gets hold of a red-hot piece of legislation. First he gives it the absent treatment. Then the boys start yammering about a petition. So Mr. O'Connor rushes the bill onto the floor. But what have we here? This bill looks a bit sick! What are these amendments dangling onto the poor thing's tail? Mr. O'Connor and his committee have given the original bill a bit of a dusting up and the result is a hodgepodge that has to be patiently taken apart and put together again on the floor—with always the hope that a crucial clause will be forgotten or defeated in a dull session.

Mr. O'Connor is seldom forced into actually fighting a bill on the floor of Congress. He had liked, in the past, to keep his record clean, so that he could say (as he did in letters to every American Labor Party member in his district) that his labor and New Deal record is clean as a whistle, innocent as a baby's heart.

But now and then weasel O'Connor is smoked out of his comfortable spot on the Rules Committee. Once, in 1935, the country and the President caught him red-handed standing up for the power trust, in the famous drama of the lobby investigation. Former Senator (now Supreme Court Justice) Black was conducting a Senate investigation which indicated that Mr. O'Connor's brother Basil was the proud possessor of a $25,000 pledge of friendship from the Associated Gas & Electric Co.—and in the meantime Mr. O'Connor was proving that the administration was in favor of the Wheeler-Rayburn Public Utility Holding-Company Bill, a not startling conclusion since the President had made speeches about it for days. The drama reached its climax when Mr. O'Connor desperately tried to save his friend, H. C. Hopson, master of the Associated Gas outfit, from a trying two hours before Senator Black's committee. Mr. O'Connor tried everything, even actually hiding Mr. Hopson—in vain. The truth would out, in this case.

Mr. O'Connor enlivens long dull stretches

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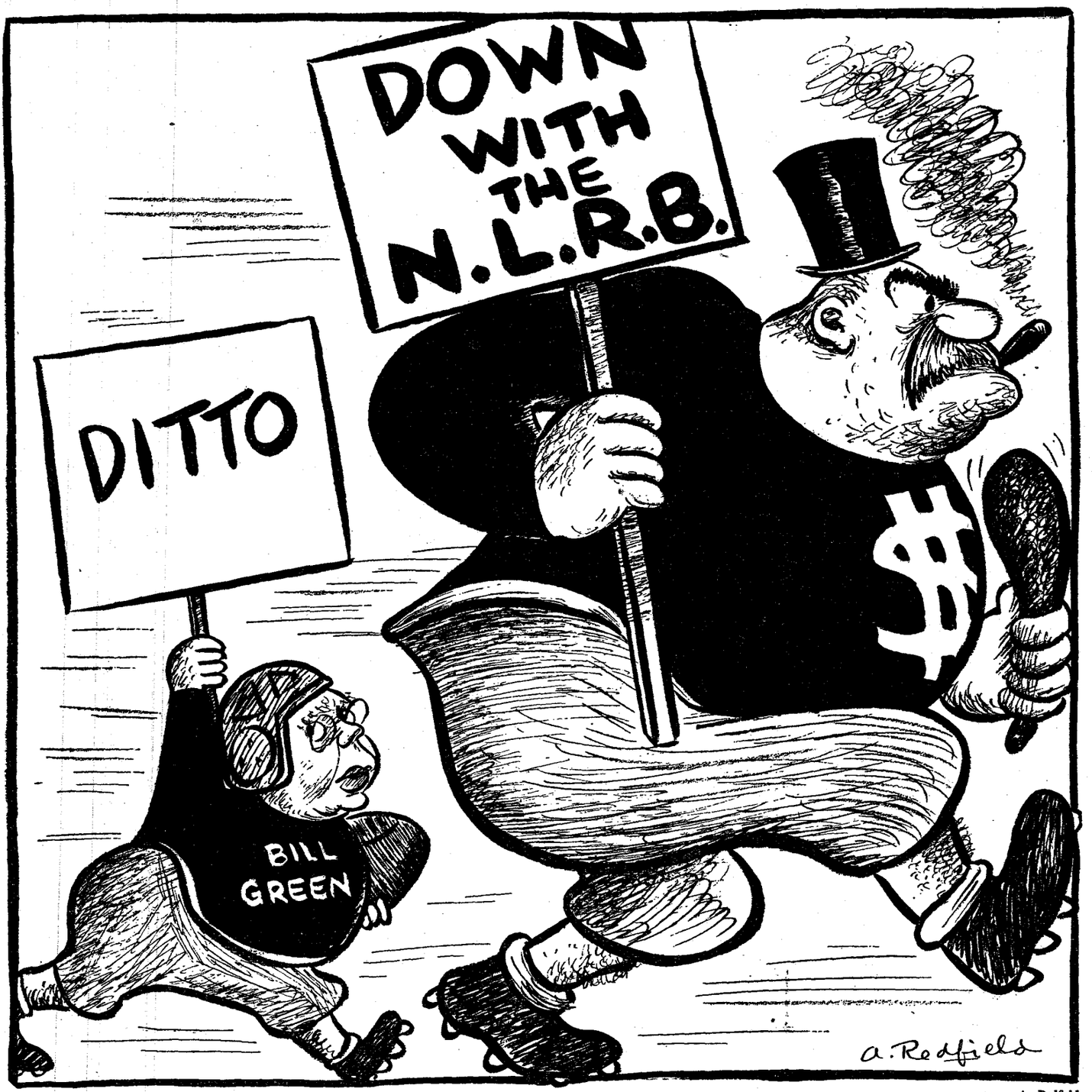
of giving legislation the boa-constrictor kiss in committee, with little speeches on the floor of Congress. Since he prefers not to discuss such uncomfortable notions as legislation, he usually gets off a little something on the Communist menace. Mr. O'Connor's approach to the Communist scourge is slightly dated—he speaks of "the long-haired professors and the short-haired social workers who keep their maiden names although married," promoting such evil organizations as the "youth movement." But although a strong lavender-and-old-lace odor pervades his speeches on them there Reds, he sometimes gets off quite an up-to-the-minute nifty. Last June he said, "The French Popular Front, which everybody knows is Communistic, has caused economic collapse in France."

As an afterthought he added, "At the moment, two major wars are going on, in China and Spain, and let me say, without fear of contradiction, that Communism was the cause of both of them."

Mr. O'Connor's activities on behalf of the power trust, the corporations who wanted the excess-profits tax repealed, the Wall Street clique who wanted less relief, did not go unremarked in the White House. A great cloud rose between Mr. O'Connor and the administration. A certain asperity began to come into Mr. O'Connor's occasional speeches about relief and recovery. When the famous Jackson speech about the sitdown of monopoly capital hit the front pages, Mr. O'Connor rose in his wrath to reply. A fine note, he howled, to have people from the administration going around hurting the feelings of big business. What's this country coming to?

The final blowup came on the Reorganization Bill. Or to put it more accurately, Mr. O'Connor got tired of giving the New Deal a secret stab in the back. He came right out in the open and led the great fight to wreck the administration's effort to build an effi-



A. Redfield

Teamwork

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cient federal-government system. During those heady days when Dorothy Thompson was welcoming hardened Wall Street Republicans and Old Deal Tammany Democrats into the fold of lovers of pure democracy, Mr. O'Connor, or his speech-writer, picked up a lot of newfangled phraseology. Mr. O'Connor helped to defeat the Reorganization Bill by howling, on the floor of the House, "There are some of us here who remember the Revolutionary War! And the Bill of Rights! And Democracy!" The applause was led by Ham Fish, from the Republican side.

Mr. O'Connor knows a good thing when he sees it. He is fighting his primary battle along the Valley Forge gun emplacements, and such is the rich confusion or the artful double-tongue of Mr. O'Connor and his campaign manager that this white knight of Wall Street, this Sir Galahad of the Associated Gas & Electric Co., is pleading for the votes of the Sixteenth Congressional District on the grounds that he is fighting American fascism!

The burblings of Tammany politicians seeking reelection to office are always painful, but Mr. O'Connor's primary-campaign speeches have reached an all-time low. "I stand," he barked over the radio last week, "like the Spartans of old, at the passes of Thermopalyæ, defending civilization! I am fighting to preserve the American system of democratic government against those, such as President Roosevelt, who seek to destroy it. This is the challenge at Philippi—I will defend the people's liberties until death!"

This from the gentleman who once said, "Government by majority can be the most autocratic, most despotic, most oppressive form of government imaginable."

This from the congressman who refused to meet with Workers Alliance delegations from his home district—because the Workers Alliance was "Red."

This from John J. O'Connor, who stabbed the New Deal in the back, sneered at the Roosevelt "mandate from the people," defeated the excess-profits corporation tax in Congress, voted for conscription of labor in wartime.

But the world moves, and the old Sixteenth, like the rest of America, ain't, from Slippery John O'Connor's point of view, what she used to be. Primary day may give the chairman of the House Rules Committee the surprise of his uneasy life.

O'Connor's district is split up into four Assembly Districts — the Sixth, Eighth, Twelfth, and Fourteenth, of which the Twelfth and the Fourteenth bulk by far the largest. Looking at the political situation from the hard facts of last year's municipal vote, O'Connor's chances are considerably less this year of President Roosevelt's "purge" than ever before in his political life.

Last year, the Sixth and the Eighth Assembly Districts returned large American Labor Party votes—more than 22 percent of the vote, compared to Tammany's 37 percent. The Twelfth and the Fourteenth, the very heart and living home of machine politics, returned large Democratic votes, but the ALP started to edge in with 8 and 7 percent of the ballots, and the Tammany machine candidate, Mahoney, lost in the primaries. This may not sound like much to innocent freeholders of the Bronx, but the Twelfth and Fourteenth Assembly Districts have for so long been considered lost causes and hopeless fights by progressives that the 8 percent ALP vote and the defeat of Mahoney were practically revolutionary victories—victories that point to an eventually somber future for Mr. O'Connor.

Mr. Fay, the ALP candidate in the Sixteenth, as well as Mr. O'Connor's foe on the Democratic ticket, has distinguished backers. His campaign posters bear the words, "The President's Choice." His street speakers, who stand on every other corner these fall nights, shout the news that Mayor LaGuardia has endorsed Mr. O'Connor's opponent. Mr. Fay himself, a fairly well known Irishman who actually (as contrasted to Mr. O'Connor) lives in the district, is no mean speaker, and his campaign has been vigorous, progressive, and directed to the needs of the people of the Sixteenth—housing, relief, WPA.

Mr. O'Connor may yet learn that it is not good last-minute campaign tactics to release a letter for a Republican rally in the Sixteenth District, stating that he would have voted against the President's Court-reform plan, if the Senate hadn't killed it first.

The Irish voters of the Sixteenth Congressional District can choose this primary day between professional Irish charm and Irish charm plus the President's backing, plus Mayor LaGuardia's endorsement, plus housing, plus WPA, plus common honesty—and progress.

★

Betrayal in Texas

W. Lee O'Daniel, who won the Democratic nomination for governor of Texas by a 31,447 majority, has begun to show his colors so plainly that Texans who voted for him are already crying "betrayal" and "dictatorship," according to a recent dispatch from Austin, Tex., by Winifred Marston of Federated Press.

"After a conference with a number of the most reactionary state senators in Texas," Miss Marston reports, "O'Daniel endorsed six candidates for state office. The men are Coke Stevenson for lieutenant governor, Walter Woodul for attorney general, C. V. Terrell for railroad commissioner, Bascom Giles for land commissioner, Judge Richard Critz for the Supreme Court, and Judge Harry Graves for the court of criminal appeals. All of them belong to the political gang that O'Daniel promised to clean out of the capitol. The only purge looked for now is one confined to anti-Allred and anti-O'Daniel elements.

"The influence of Gov. James V. Allred and his unpopular political machine is seen in the approval of the candidates and the conference of tory senators. Four of the candidates are known as Allred men.

"Another startling disclosure was O'Daniel's friendship with Maco Stewart, the worst Red-baiter in Texas. Immediately after his nomination, O'Daniel vacationed on Galveston Island as Stewart's house guest. . . . Stewart has been a persistent propagandist for a criminal-syndicalism bill in Texas. An investigation of Texas University in 1936 linked him with the combined forces of big business, Republicanism, and fascism behind the inquisition.

"Large numbers of Texans, from impoverished sharecroppers to small businessmen, feel that they have been tricked by the greatest political swindle in state history. It is yet too early to foretell what action they will take. A move to draft Maury Maverick as an independent against O'Daniel failed when it was learned that party rules prevented his running. A large number of Democrats are expected to go Republican in the November general election. The Republican Party, with characteristic stupidity, is attributing O'Daniel's attempted dictatorship to the example set by President Roosevelt.

"Only one thing can be said with assurance—the forces of liberalism and reaction are going to have a showdown during the next two years in Texas."

★

"Recovery" Outlook

It is now time for the decisive test to be made of our incipient recovery.

First of all, it is necessary to discount entirely the mushroom optimism of our "best minds" in the business world. Our troubles do not lie behind us. All the signals do not point to a runaway recovery. The best that we can hope for is a slow and steady improvement until we have again attained the 1936 rate of employment and business activity. Under present conditions, that would now seem to be our maximum possibility. And to realize it would involve a really magnificent performance in production and consumption for, after the horrible second part of 1937 has been averaged with the flush first part, it is seen that 1936 was actually a slightly better year than 1937.

At any rate, one of the most frequent statements floating around in the press, at business gatherings, and elsewhere is that business must improve because the inventory problem has been cleared up. This is viciously untrue. Inventories in many key industries, employing millions of workers and accounting for billions of dollars of our national purchasing power, are higher than they were at any time during the boom.

Examples of this condition are cotton textiles, lumber, wheat, and cotton. The metal industry, especially refined copper, has also

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increased its inventories unhealthily under the stimulus of price speculation early in the summer: manufacturers are still waiting to unload large tonnages they bought in June in anticipation of booming prices (which have failed to boom).

More, and still more important, the general level of over-all inventories is still very high. There is only one factor which can minimize the depressing influence of this familiar plenty-in-the-midst-of-want paradox, and that is rising consumption. We cannot have a fair picture of consumption until the seasonal rises due in the autumn are registered.

It is now clear, however, that consumption declined more than seasonally this summer. If rising production and high inventories are to be absorbed this autumn, consumption must reverse itself and rise at least seasonally. If it fails, it will be urgently and vitally necessary for government spending to step in and make good all such deficiences in consumption. Otherwise we are unavoidably in for a new depression. The Jesse Jones-Henry Morgenthau philosophy of keeping hands off because business is getting better by itself is a major obstacle confronting New Deal economic policy, possibly the major obstacle. Business is going to hesitate and possibly turn down again later this year unless and until Roosevelt steps in with some purchasing power.

Meanwhile, it is essential not to be carried away by the rising production indices and the cheerful headlines in October and November as the auto industry goes back to work. Of course business will get better when our leading industry goes back to work. But this is not the test. The test will not come until the new 1939 cars begin to move or fail to move. So don't expect to be out of the woods until the New Year, and be sure to vote for congressional candidates who will prime the pump because they prefer an unbalanced budget to an unbalanced economy. —ELIOT JANEWAY, *Financial Writer, Federated Press.*

★

They Shun Vienna

IN A referendum recently completed, members of the Psychologists League of New York City have voted unanimously in favor of a resolution to take the Twelfth International Congress of Psychology away from Vienna where it is now scheduled to be held in 1941. The American Psychological Association is urged as "the recognized spokesman of American psychologists to give expression to the almost universal desire on the part of American psychologists that such action be taken, not only to ensure the proper conduct of the sessions of the Congress but also to indicate our disapproval of the anti-cultural activities of German fascism."

The Psychologists League is an organization of more than two hundred psychologists in the New York area devoted to the development of psychological theory in critical coordination with social philosophy.

Is the Boycott Slipping?

Silk Stockings Still Support Japan's Army

ROBERT STARK

Two threads for evening,
Four threads for day,
Three threads for dancing,
Six threads for play.

BETWEEN today and the end of 1938 it lies within the power of America's women to render more aid to China than an army in the field. Because, *between September and December of every year,* American women buy *close to 45 percent of all the silk hosiery sold each year,* according to statistics of the Controllers Congress, National Retail Dry Goods Association.

The boycott movement started a year ago. It captured the attention of millions. It had some immediate effects. There was a demand for lisle hosiery—and American hosiery manufacturers hastened to meet it. There were 59-, 69-, 79-cent lisle stockings offered. Where are they now? Today you find $1.00 and $1.25 full-fashioned lisles—but the popular-priced stockings are almost impossible to buy.

Why? Because the boycott movement was not spread quickly and broadly enough. Because it did not succeed in winning the great masses of American women who can be enlisted in it—the women's clubs, the church groups, the YWCA's and YWHA's, the college and highschool students and alumnæ, the parent-teacher associations, all socially conscious, all peace loving, all supporters of democracy and opponents of fascism.

The fall of 1938 must mark the resurgence of the boycott movement, with the ban on silk hosiery in the forefront. The way to success should be smoother now, because (1) lisle stockings now have a "high style" acceptance; (2) a full year of Japanese carnage in China has made millions of Americans clench their fists and voice the wish that they could, somehow, help defeat the Mikado's gunmen; (3) new and amazing substitutes for silk are now almost ready for commercial exploitation and a powerful boycott movement will hasten their appearance; (4) it is today possible to show very clearly how disastrous to Japan's economy would be an abrupt cessation of American raw silk buying; (5) the fact that popular priced full-fashioned lisle stockings of excellent quality were made and sold up to six months ago is final proof that American hosiery machinery can easily turn to lisle production without any of the dire results, in idle machines and unemployment, that Japanese propagandists—and some misguided hosiery workers—prophesied.

In an article, "Japan Fights the Boycott," (NEW MASSES, February 15) this writer warned of the plans of the Japanese big business men and their American puppets to defeat the boycott movement. It cannot be denied that they have helped vitiate its effectiveness. The five-and-ten stores which promised to buy no more goods "Made in Japan" are again loading their counters with Japanese gimcracks. At the recent Merchandise Fair in Chicago, importers of Japanese goods were so overwhelmed with business that they had to cut orders down and even turn away eager buyers.

As for silk full-fashioned hosiery, its sales actually *increased* during the first six months of 1938. Here are the hosiery shipments by American mills from January through June 1938 (in dozen pairs):

	Full Fashioned	*Seamless (Incl. Rayon)*
1937.....	19,050,297[1]	6,987,762[3]
1938.....	19,521,346[2]	6,856,446[4]

[1]19.8 percent *increase* over 1936. [2]2.5 percent *increase* over 1937. [3]15.4 percent *increase* over 1936. [4]1.9 percent decrease from 1937.

The August 1938 "takings" of raw silk by the United States amounted to 38,504 bales, more than in any other month this year, and the largest since April 1937. And for those who still believe that raw silk is coming from China, it may be well to point out that of the August imports 37,150 bales originated in Japan, 830 in Shanghai (held by Japan), and only 16 bales in Canton. The rest came from Europe.

But there are other facts and figures that can give us renewed faith in the power of the boycott movement. For these show that Japan is depending desperately upon American raw-silk consumption to play a major part in her financing of the invasion of China.

Let it be clear that while the boycott should, and must, extend to everything made in Japan, the key to its success is the boycott of silk hosiery, made in America.

Raw silk is Japan's great "cash crop" and Japan produces more than 75 percent of the world's exportable silk. Out of the total Japanese production of raw silk for the 1937-38 season of 452,179 bales, the United States took 357,600 bales, almost 80 percent. Of this, the greater part was used to manufacture hosiery. In May 1938, for example, 82.5 percent of the raw silk consumed in the United States went into hosiery. Hundreds of millions of dollars in American money is going to Japan for that raw silk.

The war has already brought some Japanese industries to the brink of ruin. Important

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Ad. Reinhardt

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as silk is for Japan, even the production of raw silk has been affected because of the number of small farmers called into military service. The 1937-38 season showed a drop in production of 53,811 bales under the 1936-37 season, a decrease of more than 10 percent. The decline in raw-silk production will continue. That is already indicated by the announcement of the Agricultural Office in Yokohama that the spring cocoon crop is estimated at 38,365,650 kan, or the smallest since 1922. Here is a decrease of 7,138,283 kan, or 5.7 percent under the 1937 spring crop.

While total American silk consumption has declined, the proportion going into hosiery has increased sharply. The figures, in bales, are as follows:

Season	*Total Consumption*	*Total Used for Hosiery*	*Percent Used for Hosiery*
1937-8	380,480	279,997	74
1936-7	483,742	291,588	60
1935-6	456,911	251,152	55

From the time consumer purchasing power began to fall in the United States, more rayon dresses and undergarments were bought, but silk hosiery sales were maintained and even increased.

The price of raw silk is quoted on the 78 percent grade as the base. But hosiery is made of the finer grades, up to 90 percent and even higher. These command the fancy prices. For example, with 78 percent silk at $1.68 a pound, 85 percent is $1.77 and 90 percent is $1.89. Naturally, when the greater part of the raw silk we use goes into hosiery, and is consequently of the more expensive qualities, Japan receives an even larger proportion of her income from raw-silk sales in America than our high consumption would indicate. Evidently Japan is not only dumping her coarser grades on other markets, but hastening this process as the war in China continues. In 1937-38, Japan exported 98,019 bales of silk to countries other than the United States, as compared with 67,130 bales in 1936-37, 72,120 in 1935-36, and 78,307 in 1934-35.

As long as American raw-silk consumption for use in hosiery continues, the decline in Japanese production actually has the effect of increasing raw-silk prices. The indications at this writing are that raw silk will go to $2.00 a pound before many months, an increase of about 15 percent from the present figure. But a sharp drop in the demand for silk hosiery in the United States will bring about a precipitous collapse of raw-silk prices and carry disaster into Japan's armies, for these reasons:

1. An unforeseen slump in demand, with the supply already fixed, will naturally cause a fall in raw-silk prices. Remember, too, that the first signs of a renewed boycott movement will cause American hosiery mills to buy cautiously at a time when the largest shipments of Japanese raw silk are normally engaged.

2. The boycott may be the spark that will explode the elaborate but weak structure now supporting the yen. American importers buy Japanese exchange to pay for their purchases of raw silk. The war has already had the effect of depressing the yen. Japanese gold reserves are today reduced to pitiful proportions, and the cost of maintaining 1,500,000 men in the field will soon wipe them out. In order to support the yen on the foreign exchange market, Japan has had recourse, to (a) shipping gold to the United States to settle its adverse balances, put out of gear by its heavy buying of war materials; (b) establishing rigid import quotas in an attempt to balance at least its "normal" imports against its exports; (c) putting a ban on American cotton.

3. Japan's is an economy built on textiles. It imports wool to clothe its own people. It exports raw silk to bring it foreign exchange. It imports raw cotton, fabricates it, and sells it to Far Eastern consumers. But its largest customers are today boycotting Japanese cotton goods. Little of it can be sold in either India or China. The result is the closing of Japan's textile factories, a process that is already visible. A drop in raw-silk sales to the United States would prevent Japan from resuming purchases of American cotton and completely cripple its textile industry.

These factors will all operate to hasten the total bankruptcy of Japan and stall her economic and military machines. It may well be that the break in raw silk prices which an effective boycott will induce, will be the final straw.

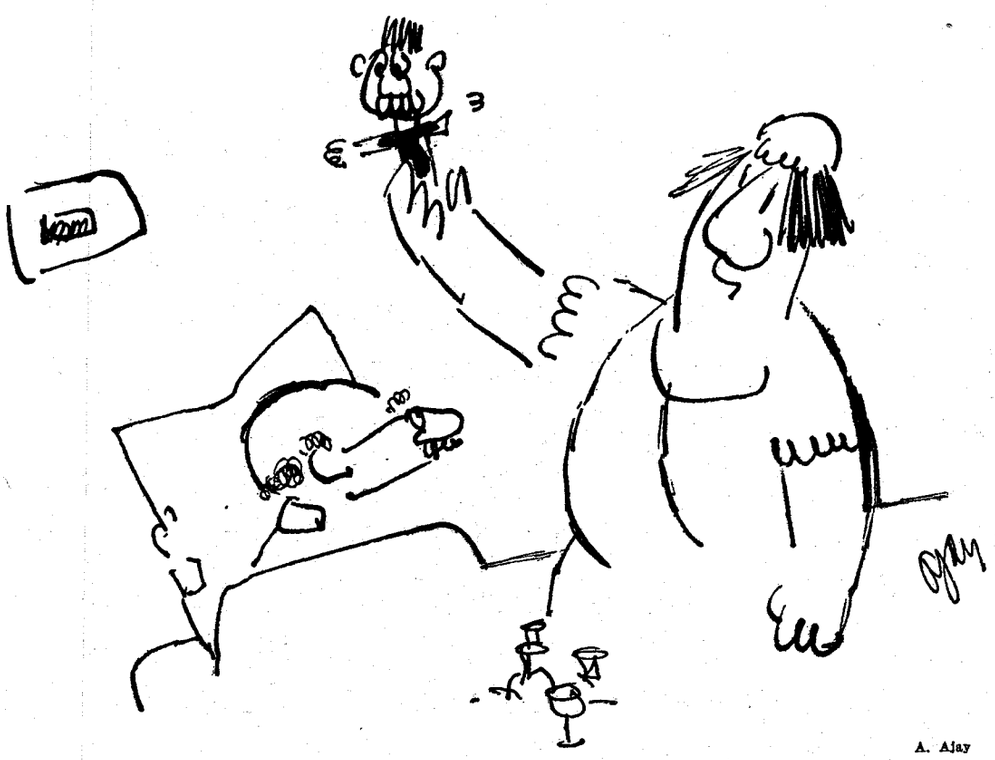
A new danger to Japan's virtual monopoly of silk production has now arisen in American laboratories. Du Pont and American Viscose are both reported perfecting new synthetic yarns which have the elasticity and appearance of silk. These are yarns of noncellulose composition, and therefore not rayons. (It may cause du Pont some headaches to have their new product blamed for a drop in Japanese munitions orders, but we will have to let du Pont worry about that.) A determined and widespread boycott will hasten the completion of experimental work and the marketing of these new yarns. In short, women may again, soon after they establish the boycott, find their legs encased in "silken glamour" all over again. But no Japanese militarists will profit!

What must *we* do now? China calls for no International Brigades. It is true that in disregard of anti-war pacts, munitions flow to Japan—with the United States supplying more than half of all her warmaking equipment and supplies. But China is also receiving shipments of airplanes, bombs, guns, and munitions. Out of a mass boycott movement can well arise the pressure that will stop all munitions shipments to aggressors, Japan as well as Italy and Germany.

But our first task is to aid the Chinese people in the quickest, most direct, most effective fashion. And that is by the immediate application of the boycott on all goods made in Japan and on all silk hosiery in particular.

When you ask for lisle, when you insist on lisle, the salesgirl tells the buyer, the buyer tells the mill selling agent, the agent tells the manufacturer. And the manufacturer cuts down his buying of silk. Multiply your insistence on lisle by several million—and raw-silk sales will drop, crash.

Help China—help Peace—defeat Japan—*boycott Japanese products—boycott silk hosiery* and all silk fabrics and garments.



A. Ajay

"Migawd, Pa! Look what the Dies committee unearthed in our backyard!"

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British Labor vs. Hitler

A Report on the Trades Union Congress

JOSEPH NORTH

London, September 12. (By Cable.)

After the Trades Union Congress I went down to London and followed the crowd to 10 Downing Street where the Cabinet deliberated, and I wondered what effect the delegates of five million British workingmen had had upon the issues being discussed behind the walls of the Premier's little brick house. All the world and Britain were waiting for "a firm statement" from the Chamberlain government. Labor wanted Chamberlain to say the word that would halt Hitler. For the biggest issue at Blackpool—one that colored every moment of the congress—had been: war or peace.

As Halifax strode past with his umbrella this morning, avoiding photographers and the people's eye, I knew he would not answer the question. But Britain demanded an answer. The people wanted peace. They didn't want 1914, and yet it seemed to be here all over again—all the fearful suspense, all the waiting for a word that wouldn't be given. The atmosphere of 1914 is everywhere in England; it seeped into the congress hall at Blackpool despite efforts of Sir Walter Citrine, head of the British trade-union movement, to keep the debates clean of all controversy which might rouse the ire of Whitehall. The bludgeon of the Trades Dispute Act—a sort of sedition law—lay on the platform, and Citrine pointed at it every time those delegates (and there were many) moved for specific action to "implement" the fine resolutions passed. Pressure from Britain's labor movement proved responsible for a stirring manifesto signed by the Trades Union Congress, Labor Party, and representatives of the parliamentary Labor Party. The manifesto came at a critical moment. Wednesday night, September 7, another "incident" was concocted in Sudeten territory. The Hitler press played it to the skies. Negotiations were again broken off. Was the zero hour here? The Blackpool manifesto sped to the press and went over the wires to Nuremberg. British workingmen demanded a united stand of Britain, France, and the Soviet Union in defense of the Czechs. Collective security was endorsed; aid to Spain urged. The very declaration of these demands undoubtedly must have made Hitler think twice and again.

But the question is: Will this resolution be transformed into reality? The common people are willing to act, but leadership of Citrine's type is in the way. Words at Blackpool were brave—but the British government, past master at brave words itself, knew how to gauge them. The London *Times* yesterday said approvingly, "What the congress has now done is to declare that it has no right and makes no claim to change the policy of the government responsible to Parliament by the active or passive use of the collective power of the unions." Which is exactly to the point. Delegates a-plenty wanted to use the "collective power of the unions" to shatter the pro-fascist government of Chamberlain, to substitute for it a government which would respond to the desires of the people of Britain. But Citrine's machine (one delegate said it had all the qualities of a steamroller, minus the red flag) did its work. But the machine couldn't flatten out all opposition. Not by far. The big issue was peace or war. Pressure of events and the working-class movement forced a declaration which in itself is an act against war.

But was this sufficiently strong action? Most believed not. They demanded the immediate recall of Parliament. Most papers don't believe Parliament will be recalled—not unless the peace movement takes on a greater virility. Citrine saw to the defeat of the demand for special conferences of all anti-fascists in the British Isles under the leadership of the trade unions. He refused to sanction any support of the dockers who had rebelled at loading ships to Japan. This was economic action that would have embarrassed Chamberlain, and Citrine is opposed to that.

In brief, he succeeded in scotching practically every emergency measure toward action that the delegates desired. But not every one. A resolution of the locomotive engineers for "effective steps" to force the raising of the arms embargo against republican Spain passed. The original manifesto submitted to the three bodies was much stronger than the one that was finally adopted. It called for industrial action in this critical period. This was deleted at the insistence of certain powerful members of the General Council. Citrine's suavity failed to weaken the appeal for Spain made by Will Paynter, South Wales miner, former fighter in the International Brigades in Spain, who brought the congress to its feet. Immediate financial aid was agreed upon; the General Council itself voted five thousand pounds and urged constituent unions of the Trades Union Congress to do likewise.

Indicative of the ultimately irresistible desire of British labor for national and international unity against fascism was the debate upon the Oslo conference of the International Federation of Trade Unions held last spring. The convention's final day saw a bitter attack upon Citrine's policy that had broken off negotiations for unity with the Soviet trade unions. Arthur Horner, speaking for the Miners Federation of Great Britain, charged the British delegation at Oslo with violation of their mandate, which was to support continuation of negotiations. The congress ultimately passed a resolution by the tailors' and garment workers' union which "expressed its regret at the absence of any satisfactory result of the negotiations between the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Russian trade unions" and asked the General Council to continue its efforts to achieve unity by trade-union organizations in all countries. H. H. Elvin, chairman of the Trades Union Congress, had originally indicated the leadership was not at all in favor of the resolution.

The congress made decided progress upon international affairs. It scarcely touched domestic issues, wage increases, better working conditions, unemployment relief, housing. But its resolutions on foreign affairs were headed in the right direction. It spoke up for collective security; demanded arms for Spain, opening of the French border; demanded immediate summoning of Parliament. But the congress fell far short in its failure to implement these demands. All decisions taken by the congress are only of value if they are transformed into deeds. A strong movement grew out of the congress to ensure that these demands be realized. I saw signs of it in the crowds outside Chamberlain's offices this morning. They urged that Runciman, the Prime Minister's stooge, be recalled from Czechoslovakia. They wanted an unequivocal declaration from the Cabinet that England would "stand up to" Hitler if Czechoslovakia is invaded. It is well understood in most quarters here that if this particular crisis be weathered peace hasn't yet been achieved. So long as Chamberlain and the Cliveden set remain in power, maneuvers will continue to aid the aggressor nations by capitulation after capitulation. Hitler will win his wars without fighting them. The problem is not merely to delay the crises, but to resolve them altogether. And this can only be done by turning out of office what one Blackpool delegate called "the fifth column of fascism within British democracy"—Chamberlain's government.

*

What Are We To Do?

IT WOULD be hard to find a book at once more arrogant and more ignorant than John Strachey's latest. In the ranks of the Tom Girdlers there is more arrogance and more ignorance but the Tom Girdlers are unable to find publishers for books they might want to write.—ALFRED M. BINGHAM, *reviewing John Strachey's latest book, in the September "Common Sense."*

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Green Repudiated

WILLIAM GREEN has been busy double-crossing organized labor again this week. Frankly, it's no easy task to keep up with the silver-tongued Mr. Green and his political adventures. We hardly have time to polish off a few caustic phrases about Mr. Green's official praise for Ham Fish, the Dies committee, and that friend of Wall Street (and, of course, the working man), Bruce Barton, before he's at it again. This time Green has given the official endorsement of the American Federation of Labor to Sen. James J. Davis of Pennsylvania, running on the Republican ticket for reelection against Governor Earle, Democrat. The merest child knows that Senator Davis is a black-as-night reactionary, a Hoover Republican, fanatic labor-hater, and all-around apologist for the steel and coal barons.

We're glad to report that AFL leaders in Pennsylvania, including James J. McDavitt, president, and David Williams, secretary, of the State Federation of Labor, immediately repudiated Green's endorsement. AFL unions have likewise repudiated Green's kind words of praise for Senator George of Georgia, Governor Davey of Ohio, and most of the other reactionaries he has boomed for office in the current election campaign.

By their repeated endorsements of tory candidates, Green and his colleagues of the AFL executive council are demonstrating that, out of hatred for the CIO, they are joining with the reactionaries in opposing President Roosevelt's attempt to build a progressive Democratic Party and save the New Deal for the people of America. They are seeking to split American labor politically as well as on the economic field and prevent the unification of the people around the New Deal program. Fortunately, the increasing repudiation of these tactics by the AFL membership gives hope that the gentlemen at the head of the AFL will not succeed, though they are undoubtedly capable of doing great harm.

From a Catholic Bishop

WE ARE indebted to the *Commonweal*, Catholic weekly, for one of the most important utterances that has come from a spokesman of the Catholic Church in this country in many years. We refer to the article, "Are We Fair to the Church?" by Bishop Robert E. Lucey of Amarillo, Tex., published in the September 9 and 16 issues of the *Commonweal*. Bishop Lucey takes to task those influential Catholics who, by their espousal of reactionary causes, have tended to identify the Church as a whole in the public mind with the forces of reaction. In contrast to the majority of the upper hierarchy, he courageously take up the cudgels in behalf of the proposed Child Labor Amendment, President Roosevelt's Court-reform bill, the CIO, and collective security. The bishop praises the achievements of the CIO (60 percent of whose members, incidentally, are Catholic), urges Catholic support for the great movement of industrial unionism, and rejects the false issue of Communism which has been raised concerning the CIO.

But on one point Bishop Lucey is in error. He writes: "Our condemnation of the whole movement [the CIO] brings exceeding great joy to the hearts of the Communists." Communists do not at all rejoice at the attacks on the CIO and other progressive movements emanating from Catholic circles. On the contrary, Communists welcome such enlightened statements as those of Bishop Lucey. We believe that he more truly represents the teachings of his own church, as well as the needs of the overwhelming majority of Catholics, than do those who adopt a contrary attitude. In the furtherance of the economic and social aims which Bishop Lucey so ably advocates, Communists have offered and will continue to offer fraternal cooperation to Catholics.

Public Education, 1938

NOW that summer vacations are over and thirty million of our children are back in school, we should like to lean back in our swivel chairs and indulge in a bit of patriotic self-congratulation over the marvelous success of our American system of universal free public education. For years it has served as a beacon to the oppressed from all over the world. Fifty years ago 2 percent of the children in this country went to high-school. This year, about 25 percent of the thirty million in our public schools are in high-schools! This is magnificent progress . . . and the editorials in the press have not failed to call attention to it.

We, however, cannot rid ourselves of the thought that in view of the immense wealth created by our people, our educational achievements, relatively speaking, are woefully inadequate. We recall President Roosevelt's message to Congress in February, transmitting the report of his Advisory Committee on Education. The opening paragraph of that message reads:

> The public-school system in the United States greatly needs improvement. Glaring inequalities characterize educational opportunities and expenditures for schools throughout the nation. The level of educational service that can be maintained under present circumstances in many localities is below the minimum necessary for the preservation of democratic institutions.

Many rural sections have no schools at all. Most of the Negro schools in the South are travesties, not schools. Millions of children of the unemployed have not the proper clothes to wear in school or are too undernourished to derive any real benefit from the schooling they get.

This is the richest country in the world! Self-congratulation? Nonsense. Our federal and state and municipal governments must see to it that all America's children be warmly dressed and properly fed—these are absolute prerequisites for any well-functioning educational system. Also, as the Communist election platform of 1938 points out, we must "establish an extensive program of federal aid to state and local communities for education as proposed in the report of the President's Advisory Committee on Education, with special provisions to abolish the present differential between North and South and to provide equal aid to both Negro and white schools in the South." This is something for the next Congress to act on.

Unity in San Francisco

CIO longshoremen, AFL teamsters, and seamen appeared this week at the picket lines of striking AFL department-store workers in San Francisco. They served notice that neither the machinations of shipowners, the attacks of open-shop employers, the tricks of William Green, nor the wrecking by Trotskyites have dented the unity of rank-and-file union members on the West Coast. The department-store owners, shocked by the solidarity of support offered to the strikers from CIO as well as AFL union members, are already dickering for peace. Shipowners, who have announced their in-

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tention of making war on Harry Bridges' CIO longshoremen, are revising their estimates of easy victory on the waterfront. Their strategy appeared, a few weeks ago, to be working—on paper.

For Harry Lundeberg, advised by Trotskyites with no other program than to disrupt the labor movement on the West Coast, had withdrawn his seamen from the CIO and was promising to organizing a dual union blessed by William Green, on the waterfront. Shipowners rushed to renew contracts with all maritime crafts except Bridges' longshoremen. Then they invited Bridges to sign suicidal terms for a new contract—or strike. They expected, apparently, that the CIO longshoremen would be deserted by Lundeberg's seamen and isolated from the other San Francisco workers. It was a divide-and-conquer theory.

The big San Francisco merchants jumped the gun on the shipowners. They hoped to cash in on the apparent division in labor's ranks by forcing their clerks into what they expected would be a hopeless strike. But the organized workers of San Francisco rallied to support the AFL strikers.

Shipowners are now brooding over the dismal possibility that rank-and-file unity will bring any waterfront strike, AFL or CIO, to victory. The deadline for the expiration of the longshoremen's contract is September 30. Rank-and-file solidarity of labor in San Francisco may be able to prevent another costly waterfront strike, or, if the shipowners decide to go on with their attack on unionization, labor unity can end the struggle with a quick victory. The San Francisco department-store strike is the most hopeful labor news of the week.

Facts Speak

FACTS speak for themselves. Last week, a tabulation showed that two-thirds of the membership of the United Auto Workers Union have officially gone on record favoring the CIO peace plan to settle the Martin-manufactured dispute in the organization. Every local of the UAW received the Lewis peace plan directly from CIO headquarters in Washington. Every local was asked to (1) get its executive board to pass upon it and (2) call a membership meeting to vote one way or the other. The results, reported to CIO officials, show that every large local in the organization except that in Flint has voted yes on the Lewis plan. The Flint local leaders, Martin men, have refused to call a meeting to act upon the proposal.

Out of an estimated membership of from 300,000 to 325,000, the official tabulation shows 225,150 union members in fifty-nine locals have approved the CIO plan. Of these locals, twenty-three formerly supported Martin. For the official record, votes against the CIO plan came from the Wisconsin district meeting, which excluded pro-CIO locals and leaders; the Pontiac local; and the Cincinnati Auto Council. These are facts. Even the hysterical Mr. Martin and his behind-the-scenes adviser, Jay Lovestone, cannot dispute them.

On the Martin side of the ledger, this week, posed neatly against the support of the UAW membership for the CIO peace plan, there is Father Coughlin. The Michigan fascist comes out strongly, in this week's *Social Justice,* for Homer Martin and his expulsion of UAW officers.

Father Coughlin is against the CIO peace plan—and the auto workers are for it. The facts speak for themselves.

The Hines Mistrial

JUSTICE FERDINAND PECORA, an honest man leaning over backwards to be fair, played havoc with the Hines trial last week. Although a month's testimony had proved to the whole world that James J. Hines, behind-the-scenes Tammany power, took money from the late Dutch Schultz to "fix" the cases of arrested racketeers, Justice Pecora declared a mistrial on a technicality of the law that baffled even the understanding of lawyers.

Justice Pecora's action was not inevitable. He might have ordered the jury to ignore the fatal poultry-racket question of Prosecutor Dewey, a question never answered in court. Instead he declared a mistrial. Now the state must once again round up scores of recalcitrant witnesses, once more spend weeks presenting its case. Hines and his lawyers, who seized any pretext, however slight, to end the trial and prevent the jury passing on the evidence before it, hope that next time the prosecution's case will be damaged by disappearing witnesses and their own foreknowledge of every move that Dewey will make.

But whether or not the state can convict Hines in a second trial, Tammany, and all that corrupt machine politics stand for, has already appeared before a jury of its peers—the people of the city of New York. And no mistrial can save Tammany Hall from the verdict of guilty.

Refuting a Canard

BIG business may try to kid the people, but it has no intention of kidding itself. The August 31 issue of the *Annalist,* "a journal of finance, commerce, and economics" published by the New York *Times* Co., contains an article which, we feel certain, will be politely ignored by the anti-New Deal press. The article, written by H. R. Baukhage and Theodore R. Goldsmith, is an emphatic refutation of the tory propaganda that the New Deal is pouring federal money into those states where it needs votes. Specifically, the article pulls to pieces the attack on the distribution of federal funds published in the May 23 issue of *Life* magazine. It presents statistical evidence that *Life* completely distorted the picture and that *Life's* own figures do not bear out its assertion that the Roosevelt administration spent least in the safely Democratic Southern states. The authors declare:

> Surprisingly enough, a careful analysis of the figures fails to disclose any evidence of favoritism among the states which can be clearly traced to a political motive. On the contrary, the per capita expenditures show a fairly even distribution except in areas where some large federal project such as the Boulder or the Grand Coulee Dam was placed by reason of geographical necessity.

Will the New York *Times,* which publishes the *Annalist,* consider the findings of Messrs. Baukhage and Goldsmith fit to print? We doubt it.

Macfadden's Fake

WE NEW MASSES editors like to feel that we keep abreast, at least, with the latest in Soviet foreign policy and Stalin interviews. So we were pretty darned upset last week when we discovered *Liberty,* our slightly loud-mouthed contemporary, had scooped the world on a red-hot Stalin interview.

Loud cries of "Shucks!" and "Aw, gee, whiz," rang through our office as we skimmed through *Liberty's* lead piece for the week—a gossipy little account of a heart-to-heart talk with Stalin by none other than that pearl of the aristocracy, that blue-blooded journalist, Princess Catherine Radziwill.

"Gosh," our foreign editor muttered gloomily, "Stalin tells the princess he wants to team up with Hitler and doesn't give a darn about Spain or China."

"Gee," we all echoed.

So it is not without considerable personal pleasure that we report that the Princess Radziwill interview is a complete, perfect, 100 percent phony, a fake from the first Stalin chuckle to the last. It turns out, according to Moscow cables, that the good old princess ain't set foot on Soviet soil for these many years—and even if she did sneak in under another name, records show Stalin hasn't granted an interview since the famous one with Roy Howard in 1936.

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Forsythe's Page

Britain Lights a Forest Fire

THE world for the past two weeks has been undergoing an operation with a local anaesthetic, fully conscious and able to watch the surgeons with fascination and horror. Even the stupidest of us know what is happening, having the story of 1914 still vivid in our minds, and we are fully conscious that we may be watching our death, with no chance of averting it.

My own recollections of 1914 are very clear. I was working in the mining-engineering office of my brother in Johnstown, Pa., and the big news that summer was the building of the Fort Stanwick Hotel. There must have been a great many unemployed men at that time because there were hundreds of loiterers hanging around the excavation. It was quite true that few knew where Sarajevo was or how important the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand was going to be, but it is equally true that for several days after that happened, the crowd around the digging dwindled and there were many people in front of the office of the *Tribune,* reading the bulletins.

Since many of the men out of work had come from European countries, I suppose they were more conscious of what was happening than the rest of us, but I can't remember anything that was said which might have caused anybody to think of war, and the assassination was a two-day wonder, the men drifting back almost immediately to watch the big scoops at work on the basement. For a time there was nothing in the papers except vague rumors, but I can remember the first shouts of the newsboys about mobilization. The word itself had a strange sound to an American ear, but I used to get a paper at noon and another edition later in the afternoon and go up to the *Tribune* office to read the bulletins between times.

Raymond Gram Swing was telling recently of his experience in that period between the killing of the archduke and the outbreak of war. He was a correspondent for the Chicago *Daily News* in Germany and sent a series of mail stories analyzing the prospect of war. To get the information, he had visited various capitals. The paper used the stories, but cut out all references to war, keeping the description of the cities and making it a travel series. There is also the story that on the night England declared war on Germany the big headline in a New York paper was: CUBS, 2; GIANTS, 1. But I can testify that in Johnstown, Pa., at least, there was great interest. There were crowds before the bulletins pasted on the newspaper offices from the first hint at mobilization, and on the night Britain declared war the streets were lined.

Remembering that experience and using the information which has become general about the reasons for the war, America understands more fully than ever before what is happening in the world. We see it coming, we shrink from it, and can do nothing. What has struck me as impressive are the parallels between Serbia and Czechoslovakia. Not the mere fact that both have been the victims of ultimatums, but that in both cases the English have sought to calm the waters by giving the aggressor what he wanted. When I wrote some months ago in these pages that England had brought all pressure on Serbia to capitulate to Austria, even going to the extent of urging Serbia to permit Austrian troops to patrol the streets of Belgrade, Philip Guedella was indignant in his denial that any such sell-out was attempted. Unfortunately, the record is against him. The documents have recently been published and there is no longer any doubt that England acted in 1914 exactly as it has been acting recently. The refusal of the Serbs to surrender the last vestige of sovereignty is equaled by the determination of the Czechs to fight rather than be emasculated.

Of all the happenings lately, I was most interested in the speech of Sir John Simon at Lanark. That he should have been put forward to warn Hitler was carrying irony to the ultimate. You may recall that it was Sir John who tossed the match which started the forest fire the world is now trying to put out. As Britain's Foreign Minister at the time of the Japanese aggression in Manchuria, Sir John not only refused to cooperate with Secretary Stimson of the United States in League of Nations sanctions against Japan, but presented the Japanese viewpoint with such astuteness in the League sessions that the Japanese delegates came out saying: "Why should we bother speaking? Sir John is doing it for us." His Lanark performance was in the nature of a man who comes running with a sprinkling can to put out an oil-tank blaze. His legal mind was again at its best, saying nothing with such meticulous care that Hitler in his Berchtesgaden villa merely said scornfully, "Bluffing again!" and promptly ignored it. It has since required repeated statements by other British representatives and a pitiful hanging about by Nevile Henderson, the British ambassador to Germany, to get a word in with Hitler to assure him that the British *really do mean to be firm. How firm may* be seen by the editorial in the London *Times* suggesting that perhaps the only sensible solution would be the cession of the Sudeten areas to Germany. The rage which followed that may serve to defeat the purposes of Chamberlain and Henderson, but it was no less the intention of the British government. If the response to the trial balloon had been anything less than violent, we should have seen the Czechs sacrificed.

But I am weary of denouncing the British ruling classes. I will leave it to the gay gentlemen who have had so much pleasure in reproaching me for my Anglophobia. What I am concerned about is the forest fire which Sir John Simon so carefully ignited with his gold-cased Dunhill lighter. The stupid and vicious man felt that he was playing entirely safe in ignoring the principles of international decency for what he considered to be the future advantage of Albion. The idea, as is now generally realized, was to buy off the fascist powers by turning their interest in another direction. That direction was the Soviet Union and anybody who fails to realize that has no understanding of the present international situation. But what the cold and calculating Sir John failed to foresee was the cumulative ferocity of a forest fire. Not only does it grow as it spreads, but it spreads in all directions. It spread to Ethiopia, it spread to Spain, it spread to Austria, it has spread to Czechoslovakia. The attempts of the British to confine its course have failed. There is the very real possibility that it will now spread to the British empire.

But what the advocates of isolation for the United States fail to see is that we are no less a victim of Sir John than England itself. Denouncing him and washing our hands of him are no longer enough. It is no answer to say that putting the fire out is the problem of the man who started it. The accredited way to stop a forest fire is to build trenches so wide that the flames cannot leap across. The place to do that is at the farthest point from our own backyard. If we wait until the fire has swept down through the woods to our back fences, it is too late. Czechoslovakia affords such a trench for the world now. Allowing the Czechs to be swept away will not stop the conflagration; it will only add to it. The English have thought for years that they could halt the flames by ignoring them; they are seeing now that such a hope is futile. We can sit back for a time and listen to the reports of the fire elsewhere but the day will come when it is upon us. When that time comes the flame of fascism will have grown to proportions where nothing will be able to halt it.

I appreciate the thought of those who abhor war. Because I have reached an age when it is possible that I should not be called for service, I may seem more bellicose than I would if I were of the fighting age. But what I am proposing is the only way to preserve peace. There is an actual situation in the world. We either face that while we have a chance to defeat it or we face it later when there is no chance.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

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Growth of the Chains

The Second of a Series on the Little Business Man

JOSEPH STAROBIN

OBSERVE the little business man whom you know: the elderly gentleman who owns the delicatessen on the corner, the aged couple who alternate in tending the candystore, the pathetic fellow who reads the newspapers all morning in his barber shop, the enterprising hardware merchant who is always running fire sales—they comprise an important section of what we call the American middle classes.

Considered as an entity, they are no more than a vestige of their former strength and power in American life. Taken separately, each little store is often the social center of the neighborhood, where women rock their babies in the early afternoons, young fellows gather to exchange banter in the evenings, and older men ruminate about the news. The Currier and Ives print of that venerable American scene—the David Harums trading tall tales around the iron stove of the village general store—represents a still-shot of an important phase of American culture. It brings home the influence of the retail function since the days of the trading post.

But take the little business man as a human being, as a man that's trying to make a living, selling thermometers to thimbles—and you have the problem of several million American citizens who have been shattered in the millstones of capitalist life.

Life drags on at forty, and the retailer is not ordinarily a young man. He has been in business before, in the same or in a different line, in another city or section of the town. Or he may have fallen out of his trade as a mechanic, a carpenter, or a garment worker, and the chances for reemployment grew slim from month to month. Rationing his savings to keep alive, unable or unwilling to borrow or apply for relief, there was always the alternative of opening up a store. Or else, after working at a steady job for several years, he was anxious to be rid of the boss, rid of the timeclock, the routine, and the grind. What could be sweeter than a modest independence in an establishment of his own?

Finding the proper business to buy was a problem in itself. Location is important (the best locations are most expensive, the poorest bring the least in trade), and the stores on corners or busy thoroughfares are prized. Moreover, in a great cosmopolitan community like New York, the national origin of the small storekeeper is still of real significance. Everywhere, and often within an area of several blocks, distinct national groupings exist. Among little business men, both the immigrant and the second-generation American who may have been poorly assimilated, the tendency prevails to open up a store among his own kind. And of course, for the Negro storekeeper, this segregation is not a matter of his own choice.

Exhausting his complaints against monopolies and chains, his bitterness at the credit stinginess of the banks, the little business man wants to talk about prices, taxes, earnings.

Large-scale price cutting—the collapse of price levels—that is one of the retailer's major misfortunes, a major element in his dissatisfactions. Not that he wants to overcharge the consumer or maintain a price structure that will only tighten the housewife's purse. It is only that when prices drop suddenly, due to factors beyond the single retailer's control, it is the man behind the counter that suffers. He may have ordered or bought his goods at a certain price level, but when a large chain store or even another retailer like himself takes the trapdoor out from under the price level on a certain kind of merchandise, it is the independent retailer who is trapped.

A man who sells specialty wear in one of the suburbs on the outskirts of New York emphasized this to me by the illustration of a famous brand of bathing suit, which sells at a figure that is uniform throughout the East. So that he knows that no one (and uppermost in mind, the chain) will sell that bathing suit for less than, say, $5.

Recognizing the complexity of the price-control problem, most retailers are quick to point out that they oppose the sort of price control which the large monopolies exact in the industrial field, keeping prices rigid and exorbitant. They want some form of democratic price control, so that a man can make an honest dollar. A stable rather than a high price level, this is what the little man desires.

But taxation is the field for the greatest free-for-all, and on this question hundreds of thousands of little business men have been caught in the reactionary web. The sinister forces of reaction play their lutes most cleverly on this matter, channelizing business discontent on many other scores against the tax policies of the local, state, and particularly the federal government.

Taken apart from everything else, resentment again taxation is human and understandable. Everyone dislikes high taxes on gasoline, the excessive taxes on cigarettes, the jumble of property taxes that finds its way into high rents. But the problem is to ferret out the weasel in the reactionary taxation arguments and, above all, to indicate a consistent tax policy for the progressive little business man.

Taking each tax one by one, the deceptions of big business are readily revealed. Over 84 percent of all retailers are unincorporated and, therefore, do not pay a corporation tax. Most retailers lose little sleep about inheritance taxes, and since 45 percent employ no workers, they have no complaint at all against social-security taxes. Little of their meager profits remain undistributed. Nor do visions of excess-profits taxes generate much heat under the collar; for most small business men, the word profits is just a word in the dictionary under the index-letter P.

In fact, it is the sales tax, that favorite among tory senators, which plagues the little business man the most; precisely that measure which seeks to distribute the taxation burden indiscriminately among the population regardless of "ability to pay." For he deals directly with the consumer, whereas the manufacturer or the wholesaler can pass their taxes on in terms of marking up their merchandise. When the little man attempts to do the same, he may succeed but only at the expense of increased consumer-sales resistance. This is recognized by the Twentieth Century Fund in its 1937 study called "The Tax Problem," which declares that "small business men do not purchase in large enough quantities and at prices that enable them to add the taxes without being affected by their competitors. . . ." And if the consumer does not pay, the retailer must do so, while there are innumerable articles on which tax collection is virtually impossible, since the unit of purchase is very small. On the other hand, the retailer is accountable for a definite percentage of his total gross sales, irrespective of whether he has been able to collect the tax himself. This is a source of irritation and complaint, and here, too, the little business man is at loggerheads with the chain, which absorbs the tax more easily and takes it out upon the consumer more skillfully.

Chart II: Number of Proprietors of Independent and Chain Stores

	1935	1933	1929
Total*	1,511,734	1,574,341	1,510,607
Independents	1,471,938	1,544,394	1,498,551
Chains	2,702	3,870	3,806

Taken from Census of American Business, Retail Distribution, 1929, '33, '35

*Includes leased department stores, mail-order houses, and direct-selling establishments.

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Chart II gives us the trend of the actual numbers of small merchants in recent years, and makes possible certain significant interpretations.

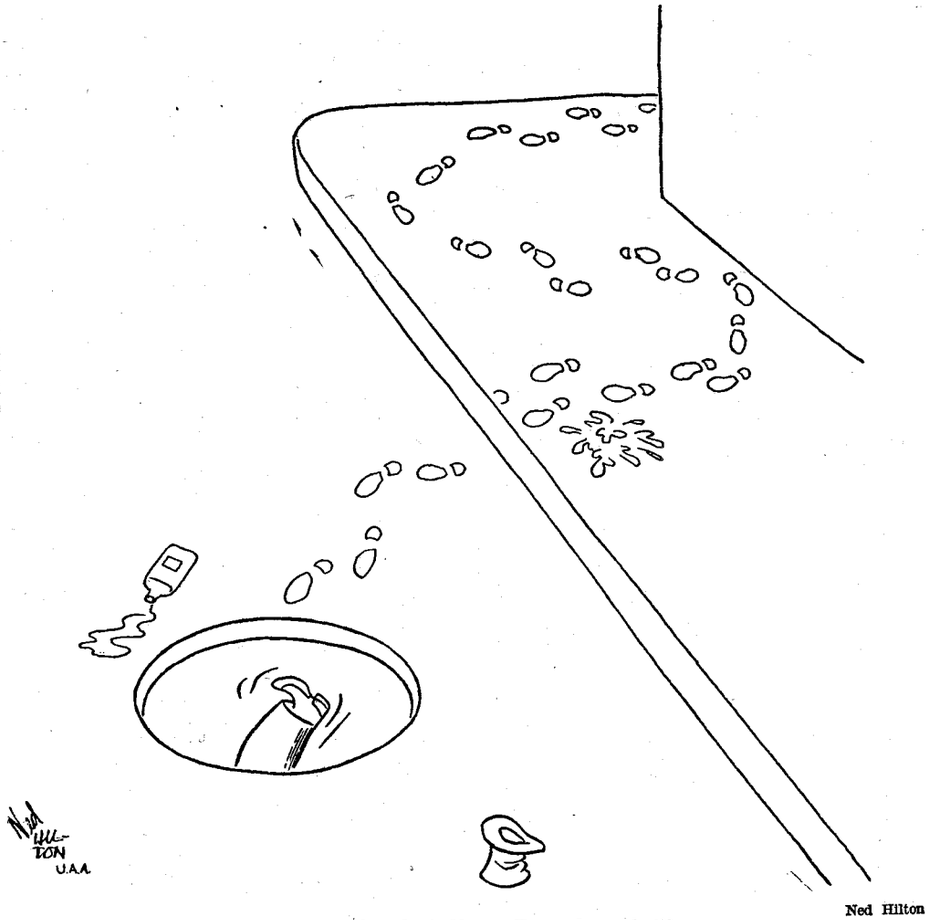
Remember that business declined 49 percent in the crisis years and recall that the share of the independent-operated store has been falling steadily. Although retailing was certainly unprofitable and definitely risky in 1929-33, thousands of people went into the field. Did I say went? Forced is probably the better word. For the only tenable interpretation of these figures is that several hundred thousand industrial and office workers, discarded by business and industry, were forced into the retail field although that field had been severely hit by the crisis and the major share of its business was giving way to the chains.

On the other hand, the drop in retail owners from 1933 to 1935 can hardly mean that 63,000 independent store owners found their places in industry. If it does, it shows that they were happy to get out of retailing and eager to get back into industry. With millions of unemployed, it is more likely that these 63,000 enterprisers, after coming into the retail field because industry did not need them, were cast out of the retail field because competition favored the chains, the mail-order houses, the direct-selling enterprises.

What is more, those retail storekeepers who have weathered the economic storm have been forced to involve members of their families—fathers, mothers, wives, and children — to shoulder the load. Out of 1,449,378 stores, over 600,000 or 45.2 percent reported to the 1935 Census investigators that they had hired no employees at all. The remainder employ about two million workers of whom a large proportion must be members of the same family as the owner of the store, and even where there are several paid employees, there are probably very few owners in whose store at least one member of the family is not working.

Furthermore, although the absolute number of retail stores has increased since 1929, there has been an absolute decrease in the number of retail employees. From 1929 to 1933 full-time employment decreased by 29 percent and part-time employment rose by the same figure. The independent owner who could afford full- or part-time workers can no longer afford them today. The small store owner has been forced to assume the full burden of his enterprise himself, and has conscripted his family to work with him. The axis of his family life revolves about the fortunes of that little store.

But if the little business man staggers beneath this load, if he gasps for credit, locked in the python's grip of monopoly, it is in the investigation of his actual cash income that the full measure of his degradation is revealed. No magnification of the figures is needed, no adjustment of the statistical lens, for the situation emerges at a glance, in stark and violent outline.



Ned Hilton

"Damn thash fellow Rooshevelt!"

In 1935, 64 percent of all retail business did less than $10,000 gross business, accounting for 11 percent of the sales. And the average gross sales for the small business man were $3,650 for the year.

That means that he took into his cash register exactly $10 per day. On this basis, what was his net income, the money return on his investment? The 1933 Census permits us to make the calculation (vol. 1, p. 20) which shows that the actual net income of the average small business man was $383.50 for the year.

To comprehend the dollar-and-cents meaning of such a figure, let us consider the average grocer who is taking in $3,650 per year. That means: he is working alone, with the help of his family, upwards of fourteen hours a day, six and seven days a week, and registering only $10 per day.

Let us assume that his rental, electric and gas bill, his water taxes and insurance and other costs approximate the average for all stores in 1935, which was $11.66 per $100 of sales. He has $8.33 with which to pay for his merchandise and compensate his own labor. Assuming that he marks his goods up by 20 percent, then he is making $1.66 per day!

Yes, the dream of the little business man was an ancient dream. It was the dream of requited labor, of modest prosperity; the dream of the quiet pursuit of happiness, of hard-won gains, of respectable achievement.

By careful application to his work, wise buying, honesty in dealing with his neighbors, by the indisputable quality of his merchandise, the little business man worked for the integrity of his position, for steady, sober, stable success. Willing to save with calculation and spend with caution, anxious perhaps to continue a paternal heritage, the little business man hoped to leave a good thing for his children—or else, provide for them the opportunities of education in the respectable professions.

It has been a modest vision, suspicious of brilliant change, perhaps not more than a shallow sounding in the deeper-flowing aspirations of humanity. A decent vision, and a tangible desire for some shaded and secure spot in a cyclonic era.

All his energies have been brought into the orbit of that little store. Wooden crates of merchandise that can't be sold are substituted for the family hearth. Vacations are out of the question. Social life withers away. The little business man has described a circle in which his ancient dream has been ensnared.

What happened to that dream is the disappointment of American life, the disappointment of American capitalist life, a disappointment which today gnaws at the fiber of the little business man, nullifies his labor, and drives him to a desperate perplexity. Resentful, he perseveres in his despair. Despairing, he remains alone. Isolated, he seeks a clue to a world which has grown inexplicable and strange.

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After Six Years

An American Revisits the Soviet Union

CORLISS LAMONT

One should no longer be "surprised" at the immense developments that take place in Soviet Russia in periods of time which, judging from the world's ordinary experience, seem exceedingly and indeed almost unbelievably short. This is one of my major conclusions after visiting the Soviet Union in the spring of 1938, six years subsequent to my first trip in 1932, and after feeling constant surprise at the tremendous progress that had been made. In other words, it is time that I and other foreign observers of the USSR realized once and for all the accelerative dynamics which are implicit in the Soviet Socialist system.

The most striking and immediately apparent contrast between 1932 and 1938 is in the realm of consumers' goods, both foodstuffs and manufactured articles, and of consumers' services. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the Soviet population has cashed in abundantly on the growth of light industry during the second Five Year Plan, 1933-38, and on the extraordinarily successful consummation of collectivization during the same period. Wherever my wife and I went in the Soviet Union in 1938—shopping and window-shopping in Moscow, sauntering along the streets of cities like Leningrad, Kiev, and Kharkov, or wandering through villages in the Ukraine—we found, most unlike 1932, the stores filled with foods and consumption goods of almost every kind.

Shops are in general numerous and well arranged. The shopper now, for instance, can go into a clean, attractive bakeshop and choose what she wants from several different varieties of bread, rolls, and pastry. Almost next door is a dairy store with milk, cream, *smetana*—the favorite sour cream—butter, and an assortment of cheese. There are different grades of butter, and the prices range from moderate to expensive according to the quality. Butter is still a good deal more expensive than bread, which has become uniformly cheap. Soviet retailers are quickly learning the art of window display. We were fascinated, for example, by the window of the dairy store on Gorky Street in Moscow where there is an amusing moving sign which goes on continuously, using a little girl, a cat, a saucer, and a bottle of milk to demonstrate that children need pure, fresh milk perhaps even more than animals.

Among the busiest places are the candy and chocolate shops. Here there are chocolate bars of various grades and prices, boxes of candy which are excellent in quality (though high in price), innumerable children's candies, bonbons, and liqueur chocolates tied up prettily in separate colored papers. Most of the candies in the Moscow chocolate shops come from the Red October chocolate factory with its up-to-date machinery and mixing processes. We took a whole morning going through this plant clad, like doctors' assistants, in white caps and gowns to keep us from contaminating anything.

Not the least interesting are the cosmetic shops, where scented arrays of powders and perfumes always attract enthusiastic buyers; and the stores where photographic supplies are on sale. Here there are films for the recently developed Soviet Leica, a thoroughly first-class product. But one can find few films for foreign cameras. In Moscow we also spent a good deal of time at the Gastronome, the large grocery store, at Mostorg, the big, rambling, always densely populated department store, and at the Arbat, the central collective-farm market to which collectives and collective farmers daily bring their surplus produce for sale.

At the Arbat, a purely functional building with a large number of booths, peasants were selling heaps of vegetables, strings of dried mushrooms and fruit, young lettuce, fish, meat, and dairy products. Here as elsewhere emphasis is laid on keeping foodstuffs fresh. And at one counter we noticed each housewife utilizing the well-known device of revolving each egg she was buying over a specially installed electric light to be sure that everything was satisfactory inside! The meat section is a sort of amiable madhouse with scores of hardy peasants, men and women, holding up good though badly cut and ragged pieces of meat, cajoling possible buyers, arguing with one another and the shoppers. The state meat trust has a long counter, clean, efficient, and with refrigeration, in this part of the Arbat. It sells in competition with the individual sellers, thus effectively regulating prices.

In the Soviet cities where we went there were fleets of trim blue and white kiosks on wheels, selling fresh fruit, dried fruit, nuts, soft drinks, sweets, and cigarettes. Standing in the Red Square on May Day for six hours through rain and cold, I kept going on excellent hot coffee, substantial sandwiches, and delicious chocolate-covered eskimo pie—all of which were sold to onlookers as if it were an American football game. In the United States this is nothing remarkable, but in Soviet Russia it is unprecedented. We later visited the efficient milk plant, employing fifteen hundred workers, where, as a sideline, eskimo pies were being turned out by the thousand.

At all the stations at which we stopped on our three-thousand-mile tour women came to the train selling an abundance of appetizing fruits, sweets, sandwiches, and other light edibles. This was very different from 1932. Another thing we observed was that there were no longer big crowds of restive peasants milling around the stations, sleeping on the benches and floors, and waiting long hours and even days for trains which were late or which had seats available. This improvement is due both to the swift development of the railways under Lazar Kaganovich and to the fact that living standards have gone up so remarkably on the farms that the peasants feel no pressure to move on somewhere else in the hope of bettering their lot.

We went for a week to the Ukraine, traveling as far south as Dneproges where the magnificent power station and dam, which are the largest in all Europe, and the nearby factory concentration, the Soviet "Pittsburgh," had been completed since our earlier trip. In the Ukraine we concentrated on collective farms, on several of which we spent the whole of beautiful, warm, sunny days. The Ilyitch Collective near Kiev, for instance, was obviously flourishing. First we had a statistical chat for an hour or so with the chairman and then took a long walk with him around the farm. We looked carefully at the well kept cowbarn and the noisy pigbarn, both full of healthy-looking stock, at the hothouses, the beehives, the fruit trees, the large-scale vegetable gardens, and the fields where the spring sowing of wheat and other grains had just been finished. Everything seemed in excellent condition. And the chairman told us that, while the total yield of the collective in 1937 had been one-third above that of 1936, for 1938 they expected approximately a *two-thirds* increase over 1937.

We ate our lunch under a shady tree outside the central office of the farm. By chance it happened to be a Sunday, which is still recognized as the rest-day in most of the agricultural districts. (In the cities the rest-day comes automatically on every sixth day.) Some of the farmers and their sons were playing pocket billiards on a table set up nearby. But more interesting from our point of view were the forty to fifty collective farmers and their wives sitting on benches under the trees and discussing at length and with animation the coming elections in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. They seemed to be taking seriously the procedures of democracy. We finished the day by dropping in at the village school, where as usual scores of eager and questioning children swarmed around us; the village clinic and nursery, clean and efficient-looking and filled with charts on the proper care of children; and one of the well stocked village shops, sort of a miniature department store, where we bought some beautiful little hand-carved wooden figures.

The other farms which we visited in the Ukraine, as well as our observations of the land in general, gave us the same impression

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of well-being and abundance. And we were not surprised to read later in the newspapers that the 1938 harvest promises to outdo even the record-breaking one of 1937. For the first time in history the Russian people have plenty to eat, which of course means primarily plenty of bread. Famine and the threat of famine, which for generation after generation in the old Russia constituted the greatest economic evil—there were nineteen famines in the last century alone—have become merely bad memories. While the production of manufactured articles for consumption has also gone ahead with vast strides, I stress the food situation because it represents in my opinion the most outstanding single achievement of the Soviet regime, and a revolution—in agriculture—second only in importance to the original revolution of 1917. Moreover, the triumph of collectivization assumes two other great achievements, namely, the efficient functioning of heavy industry which made tractors, combines, and other farm machinery available and the expansion of light industry, which stimulated the peasants with the assurance of more consumers' goods than they had ever had before.

All this does not mean that the Soviet Union can yet boast of a sufficient supply of all commodities or that it can yet meet all the needs and demands of consumers in either the urban or agricultural districts. In some lines, particularly in textile goods, new stock is quickly bought out; in other lines prices remain relatively high. Distribution and retail trade are not yet as efficiently organized as production. And production of both consumers' and capital goods is handicapped by the amount of work-time which has to go these days into turning out military supplies for the purposes of defense. In addition, it is my guess that the widespread sabotage and wrecking activities of the past few years have probably set back the Soviet economy as a whole by 15 or 20 percent.

The purge, now for the most part over I believe, went pretty far throughout the country, catching in its net plenty of lesser fry as well as big shots. But the human resources in the USSR are just as great as the natural resources. While we were in Moscow Premier Molotov gave out some figures at an educational conference which showed that there are today 550,000 students in the universities and higher educational institutions of the Soviet Union as compared with a combined aggregate of 416,000 in the comparable institutions of Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan. This is one very good reason why new and younger elements, vigorous, able, and well trained, have risen so promptly from the ranks to fill the gaps left by unfaithful officials. The Soviet economic machine is again hitting on all cylinders in its swift course forward, with industrial production for the first half of 1938 13 percent above the corresponding period of 1937. The army, too, has more than recovered from its personnel troubles and at the present moment is unquestionably at its all-time high in strength and reliability.

Another of my chief impressions in the Soviet Union was the enormous amount of construction that is going on everywhere. The first thing you notice, coming into a city by train, is that new buildings are rising wherever you look. All the big cities are in the throes of building programs—including factories, workers' apartments, offices, schools, stadiums, parkways, and bridges—that should make both capitalists and radicals in foreign countries sick with envy. Each city has its own extensive five-year or ten-year plan of reconstruction. Despite all this, however, urban housing still lags behind the needs of the people. And apartments have gone up so quickly that in many cases they have not been properly finished and faced on the outside, often giving on this account a dilapidated appearance. In general I was much disappointed in the architectural quality of workers' apartments. In this regard the Russians have certainly not yet caught up either to the splendid Vienna housing developments which I saw in 1932 or the fine Stockholm cooperative apartments which I took in this year on my way back from the Soviet Union.

I was struck, too, on this trip to the USSR, with the mechanical development since 1932. Russian-manufactured automobiles, buses, and trucks now fill the newly macadamized streets of Soviet cities with quite heavy traffic and, I may add, with quite ear-splitting noise. The new Moscow subway, with its smooth-running escalators and beautiful airy stations, runs with admirable efficiency and altogether constitutes a remarkable feat in the art of engineering. Soviet mechanical progress extends of course to military equipment, as we saw for ourselves on May Day when we watched the tanks and artillery, the airplanes and other mechanized units, passing the Red Square in review. But naturally enough the Soviet Union has not yet had time to carry through 100 percent mechanization in all its economic affairs.

One afternoon in Moscow I watched nine workers trying to get a huge two-ton granite slab, for the facing of a river bridge, up on a small wagon drawn by a rather weak-looking horse. They huffed and they puffed, they pulled and strained, for more than an hour before they succeeded in their enterprise. Not a hundred yards away masked workers were engaged in steam-drilling with the most up-to-date equipment, while just across the river big steam derricks were gouging great holes in the earth for some sort of construction work. Thus the primitive and the modern are still sometimes closely intertwined in Russia.

As for the Soviet people, besides being far better dressed and fed than in 1932, they constantly impressed us with their spirit of gaiety and confidence. We took every opportunity to mingle with them and sense their mood. We saw them in the public squares, the streets, and the parks during holiday occasions such as May Day and the regular rest-days; we joined with them in festivities at workers' clubs like the Automobile Union's Palace of Culture in Moscow; we were present with them at theater and movie, opera and ballet, and rejoiced in the absolute social and racial equality in all places of entertainment; we met them personally on many different sorts of occasions. One of our more memorable days was a long boat trip down the new and impressive Moscow-Volga Canal with about thirty Russians—artists, authors, journalists, economists, and others—with whom we conversed freely and frankly, on topics both light and serious, for hours on end.

They considered the Moscow trials a very dead issue and could not quite understand why Americans did not think so too. On this outing we talked with, among others, Vishnievsky, the scenario writer who did the cinema *We Are From Kronstadt* and who is now at work on another picture dealing with the civil war; Afinagaenof, the talented young dramatist whose celebrated play *Fear* had a long run in the USSR; and the engaging children's poet, Mikhalkov, who had translated Walt Disney's *Three Little Pigs* into Russian. Apparently the song was a huge success among Soviet children. So we told him about *Snow White*. We thought that *Whistle While You Work* and *Heigh Ho* might go very well in the Soviet Union, but that *Some Day My Prince Will Come* would not be too popular. Later we sent Mikhalkov the lyrics and words of the first two songs in hopes that he could use them.

I left Soviet Russia with the feeling that its people were well-nigh invincible in an economic, moral, and military sense. If the Soviet government was putting on a "show"

Sonnet

He was enamored with prophetic speech—
Utopias a thousand years from now—
And fond of jeweled words, "esthetic reach,"
"The fourth dimension and the cosmic bow."
Injustice was a queer, elusive theme
To him, and truth could not be analyzed,
But shifted like the waves within a dream
Whose attributes could only be surmised.

He voiced a hatred for vulgarities,
Thought that material wealth and poverty
Were only trivial disparities,
Beyond which rare minds leapt, star-eyed and free.
And if his mother might be asphodels,
His father, certainly, was H. G. Wells.

MAXWELL BODENHEIM.

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for us, then it was certainly the greatest show in the world! But it is difficult to believe that Stalin issued a secret decree ordering the Soviet people everywhere to smile and look happy on our behalf or that the bustling economic activity and large supplies of consumers' goods were in any sense faked. Indeed, while I do not wish to sound dogmatic, it is hard for me to conceive anyone going to Russia honestly in search of the facts and disagreeing about the vast improvement in living conditions.

From without Soviet Socialism can undoubtedly be set back, but hardly destroyed; from within there is about as much chance of its being brought to an end as of the United States voting to become a colony of Great Britain. The idea to which the Trotskyites still cling, that there can be a successful revolution against the present Soviet regime, is fantastic, since the economic discontent which is the Marxian prerequisite for revolution simply does not exist in the USSR. I do not consider it over-optimistic to state that, happen almost what may, Socialism has come to stay in the world. This is the portentous fact that all the dire prophecies about the impending "collapse of civilization" so blindly disregard. Civilization has taken a new and lasting lease on life in the Soviet Union; and through the Soviet people mankind again marches forward to conquer new heights of economic and cultural achievement.

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Slavery, New Style

FOREST CITY, Ark.—A new case of brutal plantation slavery under official auspices came to light here when a habeas corpus action was filed in chancery court. Officials in three contiguous counties are involved in a system of farming out prisoners to private plantation owners who pay 75 cents a day for their labor.

Tony Hicks, twenty-five-year-old Negro, was arrested June 1 in Crittenden County for trespassing. Brought across the line and tried in this county, he was fined $100 and then taken into still another county, Cross, to work out his fine.

The prisoner's lawyer, K. T. Sutton, said that a number of white and Negro convicts are worked on the plantation. Electrically charged wires surround the shacks in which they are housed. When working, the men are shackled with chains on both waist and feet, and are supervised by armed guards. Although Sutton petitioned the court to require Sheriff J. M. Campbell of this county to produce Hicks in court, the lawyer said that Campbell was not involved.

In Crittenden County, where Hicks was arrested, former City Marshal Paul D. Peacher of Earle was convicted two years ago of violating the federal anti-slavery statute for farming out prisoners to private landowners. Peacher was fined $3,500 and given a two-year suspended sentence.—FEDERATED PRESS.

Readers' Forum

On Governor Johnston

TO NEW MASSES: In your August 30 issue you carried an article by Lee Coller on the situation in South Carolina. The gross misrepresentation of Governor Johnston was borne out by his repudiation by the South Carolina voters.

One gathers from the article that Johnston is a simon-pure, perfect New Dealer with a sterling record that should have put him in without any trouble. This I object to and object to strongly as a perversion of the people's-front concept.

Nowhere in the article is Johnston's characterization of the Negro people mentioned. Nor does Miss Coller remember that Johnston was the man who vetoed a measure providing free texts for the first three or four grades. His reason contained in his veto message was that it would benefit the Negro children more than the white.

Again, Miss Coller fails to mention Johnston's tactics in the highway fight with Ben Sawyer. Miss Coller wasn't in Columbia the day machine guns appeared at the Highway Department Building. I was, and I can assure you that despite all the vicious politics Sawyer had indulged in, Johnston's tin-horn fascism wasn't particularly palatable.

I said before that the picture painted of Johnston by Miss Coller was a perversion of the people's front. Because, in the South Carolina situation, it was correct to vote for Johnston doesn't mean that one must forget the man's character. The situation in the state was this: The defeat of Smith would mean an end of reactionary domination of some of our leading committees in the Senate. Therefore the choice went to the opportunist Johnston, who, while dangerous, would follow the New Deal as long as he felt it powerful. This, I feel, is the real picture. Defeat Cotton Ed from the people's-front point of view, but don't swallow Johnston whole.

New York City. HERBERT SCHREIBER.

Miss Coller Replies

MR. SCHREIBER would be correct if he had pointed out that in contrasting the progressive platform on which Olin Johnston ran with the waving of the bloody shirt by Cotton Ed Smith, I failed to indicate that Johnston is neither progressive nor liberal on the vital Negro question and on a number of other questions. But instead he says, "The gross misrepresentation of Governor Johnston was borne out by his repudiation by the South Carolina voters." Such an interpretation implies a repudiation of the New Deal by the people of South Carolina since Johnston ran on the New Deal platform. This is completely incorrect. Johnston was defeated because of the lack of democracy —the disfranchisement of the Negroes who constitute 45 percent of the state's population—and because of the still inadequate organization of the progressive forces.

More to the point would be an answer to the question—what Southerners today can be considered progressive? In the crucial test between the forces of progress and reaction this year a candidate stands on the specific program of action he advocates. Lister Hill of Alabama was co-author of the original Industrial Mobilization Bill and opposed the Anti-Lynching Bill. But the people of Alabama, including those Negroes who could vote, sent him to the Senate in place of bourbon Tom Heflin because Hill was pro-New Deal, because he supported the Wages-and-Hours Bill, Supreme Court reform, and badly needed farm legislation. Johnston was a former disciple of Huey Long. But in 1938 he ran for the Senate on a New Deal program of an improved Wages-and-Hours Bill—in "support of the humanitarian program of Franklin D. Roosevelt." And with all the black marks which may be deservedly put on Johnston's past record the fact remains that no hardshelled conservative would have advocated a forty-hour week for textile workers or opened the door to the Textile Workers Organizing Committee as Johnston did.

With Mr. Schreiber's reminder that progressives must always oppose whatever reactionary policies New Dealers may have along with their liberalism, I naturally agree.

New York City. LEE COLLER.

A Labor Government

TO NEW MASSES: This year, New Zealand's first Labor government, which swept into office in November 1935, will go to the country, claiming reelection on its record for the past three years. No one can deny that that record has been excellent. The number of unemployed has been reduced from about fifty thousand to less than seven thousand. Relief rates have been increased by 33 percent for single men and 42 percent for married men. A forty-hour week has been introduced for workers, including government employees; Civil Servants have been given political rights, and their pay cuts, introduced by the previous government, restored.

A graduated land and income tax has been established, together with a system of guaranteed prices for dairy-farm products. A minimum wage and holidays with pay have been granted adult farm laborers. Recently there was introduced a Social Security Bill providing for increased pensions for all, a national free health service, and free maternity treatment. Minimum basic wages in industry are £3, 16s a week, and the average is considerably higher.

In international affairs, the New Zealand government has won the admiration of progressive people throughout the world by its adamant refusal to follow the lead of Chamberlain, and its strong support of collective security.

It is not too much to say that New Zealand's Labor government has done more in three years than any Labor government of Australia or England has done during the last twenty-five years.

Reactionary capitalist interests, egged on by the slanders of the Cliveden set, have, since their merging into the National Party in the spring of 1936, intensified their campaign against the democratic movement, and are trying to force a split between the government's main supporters—the workers and the farmers.

News comes of Nazi agents getting down to work. Count von Luckner's recent visit was made the occasion for Nazi rallies and intensified propaganda. Native fascist organizations are also being set afoot, with distribution of literature attacking the Labor and Communist Parties. It is not surprising to find the Trotskyites active, also. They are very small in number but are influentially placed within the progressive movements. Objectively, they follow the line of the National Party and the fascist elements, and are attempting to destroy the faith of the working class and their allies in the government by calling it "a tool of British imperialism."

Let us hope that the unity of workers, farmer-laborers, and progressives of all kinds will return the government to power and enable their Prime Minister, Raymond Savage, to make good his promise: "We are going ahead with our social program, and anyone standing in the way will get hurt."

London. BELL KEATS.

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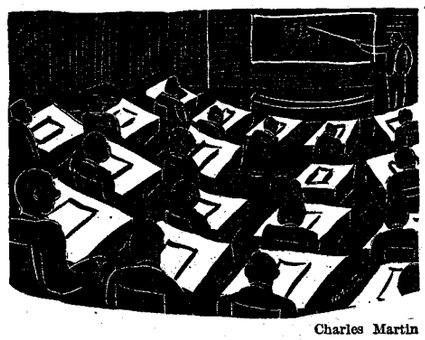
REVIEW AND COMMENT

History à la Mode

FOR some time past I have been itching to write an article on our so-called New History. History writing is a peculiar literary exercise: theoretically, the historian is merely *recording* the past; in reality, he is expressing the *attitude* of the present towards the past. That is why, in the well known phrase, every generation rewrites after its own mood. Reading current books on history is as much a study of the present as it is of the past, if not more so. A true appreciation of our New History is therefore indispensable to an understanding of our present currents of thought, and we should give to it more attention than it has as yet received from the left. The job is an important one, and I hope to be able to do it some day. In the meantime I would like the opportunity, best furnished perhaps by Prof. Paul H. Buck's book (*The Road to Reunion.* Little, Brown & Co. $3.25) and its crowning by the Pulitzer Prize Committee, to touch upon at least one corner of this vast and important subject, for Professor Buck's book is typical of the dominant mood of history writing in America today. For both in its tendency and its manner Professor Buck's book is a fair sample of our New History. It is chockfull of facts and "well balanced." Also, it apparently takes account of all "factors." Nevertheless, the picture which it presents is all out of focus—much more like the pictures one gets from a certain kind of mirror which used to be shown at old-fashioned county fairs and cheap amusement places than a true mirroring of historic events as they actually happened. Except that in this case the distortion consists not in the exaggeration of single features, but in confusing them out of recognition.

The particular means employed by Professor Buck to achieve his purpose seems to be a trick all his own, of relating facts in the reverse order of their occurrence, or at least without regard to their true sequence. As a result, the reader gets a perverted notion of cause and effect, without Professor Buck's seeming to intend it so. This is a very ingenious method, for it makes it difficult to charge Professor Buck with suppressing any facts or willfully misstating them. The facts seem to be all there—Professor Buck could easily find them for you—but the reader does not always get them, or at least gets them in a false perspective. Take, for instance, the question of the Southern "Black Codes," which have played such an important role in the history with which this book deals. Pro-



Charles Martin

fessor Buck gives no account of them in this book of some 320 pages, in which all manner of things of much less importance are recounted at great length. But if charged with suppression he could point to the top of page 68 where they are mentioned. The reader isn't any wiser for this mention, but the author's scientific conscience is appeased. Apparently, also, it was sufficient to appease the conscience of the Pulitzer Prize Committee. Not that there are no actual misstatements, but merely that these are mainly in that large domain of mixed judgment and fact in which it is hard to convict of direct misstatement of fact. So, on the same page 68, we find the following paragraph:

> The Negro and all that pertained to him accordingly formed a continuance of hostilities between the victors and the vanquished. Folly and passion characterized the approach to a problem that would yield only to the most considerate cooperation. *The North was inclined to be impatient, to insist upon an immediate solution. The South in face of the constant pressure and menace of power from outside* throughout the Reconstruction period failed to admit that there was any problem except to reassert control by the white man. Meanwhile the Negro, "drunk with freedom" and the football of Reconstruction politics, was largely unfitted for progress by the noise made over him. [Italics mine—L. B. B.]

This seems to be sweet reasonableness itself, a model of impartiality. The two statements italicized by us in the quoted passage are, however, the exact reverse from the truth, and the two together give a perverted picture of the true course of events. It is not true that "the North" insisted upon an immediate solution—as may be seen from the fact (which, incidentally, is never mentioned by Professor Buck) that the three so-called War Amendments were passed at considerable intervals. The fact is that the North was at first "inclined" to be satisfied with a minimum of action on its part, and left it to the South to take care of the main part of the solution of the Negro problem. It, therefore, merely passed the Thirteenth Amendment which did nothing more than put into the Constitution the abolition of slavery which had already taken place. And it was only after the South had shown by the enactment of the "Black Codes"—which, as already stated, Professor Buck carefully avoids discussing adequately—that it proposed the Fourteenth Amendment. It is well known that the Fourteenth Amendment encountered considerable opposition even among Republicans when it was first proposed in Congress, and it was actually not adopted until 1868. But even after the "Black Codes" had been adopted by the South, the North was not quite ready to give the Negro the vote, as is evidenced by the content of the Fourteenth Amendment. It took some more Southern history—made by Southerners—to make the North take the final step of giving the Negro the vote, which it did in the Fifteenth Amendment. The "Black Codes" and the other steps depriving the Negroes of their rights were, therefore, not taken "in face of the constant pressure and menace from outside," but were themselves the cause of "the pressure and menace from outside" which is the burden of Professor Buck's song throughout the book.

And on the very next page Professor Buck makes a similarly unwarranted statement. On page 69 Professor Buck tells us that—"It is a truism of Reconstruction history that the radicals enfranchised the Negro in order to build a Republican Party in the South." That used to be a "truism" of a certain kind of history, of which no American scholar had cause to be proud. But in 1937 it has become Pulitzer Prize history. Verily, we have been making great progress backwards.

Let there be no mistake about it: it is not a matter of this particular book, or of this particular author, or of the Pulitzer Prize Committee on History. We are dealing with a tendency which shows itself in our entire historiography, insofar as the post-Civil War period is concerned. This brings us to Professor Buck's point of view, which he shares in common with all our "modern" historians. The clue to it is found in the last sentence of the passage we quoted above: Professor Buck's estimate of the Negro, and his opposition to the "noise" which was made about him in the years immediately preceding and following the Civil War. According to the historical school

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to which Professor Buck belongs, the Civil War was a crime—a *Northern crime,* abetted by a *few* Southern "politicians"—surpassed only by the crime of attempting to give the Negro civil rights and the vote. These historians are usually vague on what, in their opinion, was the proper course for Northerners to pursue in the face of slavocracy's aggression, bolstered by the decision in the Dred Scott case which nullified the Missouri Compromise and made further compromise with the slavocracy impossible and the expansion of slavery inevitable. But while they avoid giving their own solution for the serious situation in which the country found itself after the decision of the Dred Scott case, these historians are not backward in giving vent to their opinion that the Civil War was the sordid business of "capitalists" aided by politicians. And when it comes to Reconstruction they do not hesitate to put forward *their* solution, even though they avoid calling it by its proper name—*leaving the Negro to his fate.* Or if the solution has to be put in plain words, they prefer to resort to what may look like reporting instead of judging. This is well illustrated in the method pursued by Professor Buck in this book. The reader is never in doubt as to what Professor Buck thinks on the subject. Indeed, it is the purpose of this book to let him know just that. Nevertheless, wherever possible the method of indirection is preferred. This occasionally leads to absurd situations, as in that portion of his first chapter in which he gives an account of the descriptions of the South, immediately after the close of the war, by Northern journalists. On pages 16-20, Mr. Buck reports on six Northern journalists who had gone down South to study conditions in order to report them to Northern readers. Of these, five wrote extensive series of articles or books giving an unfavorable account of the attitude of Southerners towards the Negro. All of them wrote circumstantially, and at least two of them are classed by Professor Buck himself as among the ablest journalists of their day. But all this was "propaganda." The only one who is selected for praise is a man named Benjamin C. Truman, who wrote a fourteen-page article which Professor Buck himself must admit was "a mere bundle of conclusions" as to "form." But it was this man that was the "most penetrating of all the journalists." And the reason for it is that:

> He placed implicit trust in the disbanded Confederate veterans as the best material for worthy citizenship and as the safest basis for the erection of a Reconstruction policy. *In his opinion the Negro's future would be most secure in the understanding and friendly hands of the former master class.* [Italics mine.]

This is the keynote of the book. The "road to reunion" was a long and thorny one—principally because, due to a combination of "politicians," "moralists," and busybodies, the master class was not permitted to solve the Negro problem in its own way. Professor Buck is particularly hard on "moralists," who first brought about the war by preaching the sinfulness of slavery and then continued the strife by insisting on the immorality of depriving Negroes of their civil rights. Here, too, Professor Buck is not frank enough to call a spade a spade. But, again, the reader is not the least in doubt as to where he stands. The ignorant, lazy, and shiftless Negro was unfit not only for the vote but for the enjoyment of civil rights. Civil rights meant personal liberty and the Negro needed the rod and the chain-gang. But these are not well-sounding words, so Professor Buck calls them "discipline." Of the necessity of discipline, Professor Buck has no doubt. Nor has he any doubt that only the master class could properly apply that discipline. Hence his objections to "outside meddling," which unfitted the Negro for progress à la mode—the kind of progress which he would have made under the tutelage of his former kind and patriarchal masters, or, better still, the up-and-coming younger generation of Southern leaders personified by Henry W. Grady.

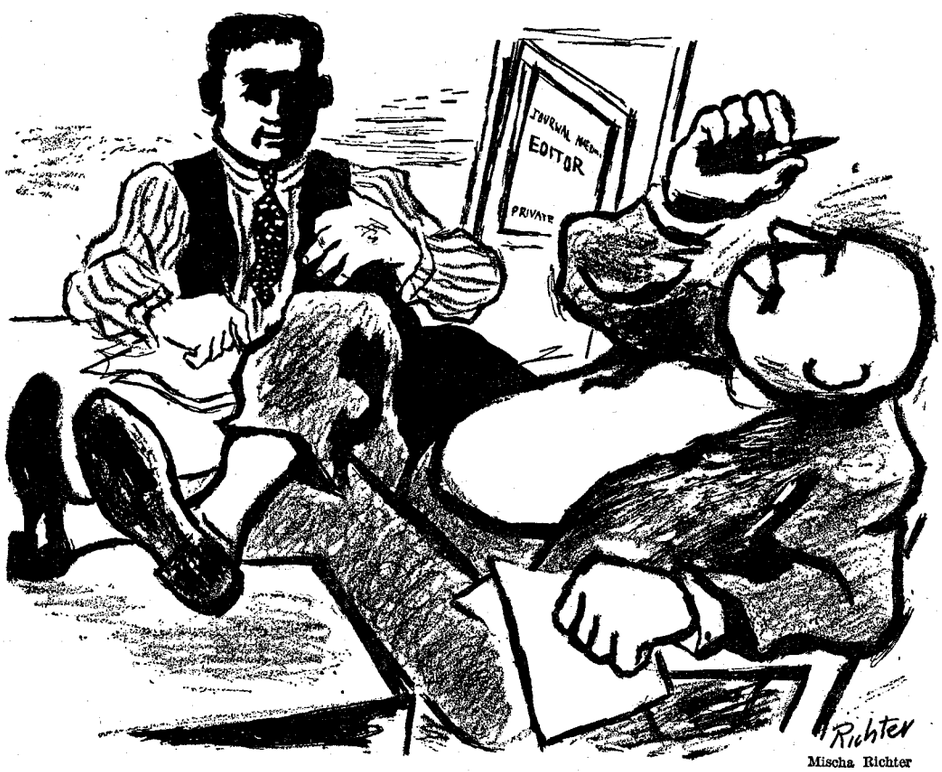
Being a moderate, and writing in the cause of moderation, Professor Buck lets charity temper his severe judgment of some, at least, of the outside meddlers. So we are told that Stevens and Sumner and some others "were idealistically or at least unselfishly motivated." The world *do* move. For I remember reading some years ago elsewhere in the literature emanating from this school, that Sumner was a "ruffian," and Stevens the devil incarnate. Calling Sumner a ruffian I thought particularly apt, and characteristic of this school—for was he not hit over the head in the Senate Chamber with a stick wielded by a Southern gentleman, Preston S. Brooks?

However, we need not visit upon Professor Buck the sins of others of his school. He has enough of his own to answer for. His chief sin is that, using almost the very words with which true history could be written, he draws utterly false historical pictures. On pages 209 and 210, Professor Buck, in discussing Southern literature during the 1880's, quotes parallel passages from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and James Lane Allen's *Uncle Tom at Home* in order to prove how, by the use of almost identical words, entirely different pictures can be drawn, and actually were drawn by these writers. He then proceeds to point out other resemblances between Mrs. Stowe's work and the work of Allen and his associates, proving that the same situations may thus be used for the purpose of achieving entirely different results. He then says:

> It is, of course, in the direction given to the contrasts that the great difference between Mrs. Stowe and the post-war writers appears. *In the former the devotion of the slave is tragically at the mercy of the master. In the latter the impoverished and usually helpless master is normally dependent upon the loyalty of the slave.* Uncle Tom was the martyr of a system, but Uncle Billy was as he himself stated the "chief 'pendance uv Meh Lady." And so in *Uncle Tom the sympathy of the reader is directed to the lowly slave, while in the post-war fiction it is the overthrown gentry who are the recipients of a forgiving pity.* [Italics mine.]

Professor Buck clearly belongs with the fictionists, for whom he expresses a very great admiration. He should not be writing history.

LOUIS B. BOUDIN.



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Little Man Driven Wild

UNTO CAESAR, *by F. A. Voigt. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.*

BOOKS attempting to show that Marxism and fascism are "fundamentally" the same, that both are equally repugnant to the liberal, and that the solution, for an Englishman, is the "Pax Britannica" or, for an American, "the American way of life" (which seems to be, judging by the Dies investigation, a sort of Higher Vigilanteism), are so common now that it is hardly worth reviewing them seriously. They will be welcomed by the Higher Vigilantes and by the Chamberlain "realists," but, to reasonable progressives, they are merely boring. Written by hacks hired by the employers' associations or by professional stuffed shirts, they are usually based upon little more than ignorance and malice.

Voigt's book, however, is worth investigating as a political and social phenomenon, though most of it cannot be recommended as good reading. Its style is sometimes hysterical, and sometimes pietistic in a way that recalls Ramsay MacDonald. It shows the same contempt for the revolutionary working class which made José Ortega y Gasset's *Revolt of the Masses* so popular with Wall Street brokers, and its virulent denunciations of Stalin will certainly please those Trotskyites who have exhausted their own stock of slander. Several reviews in American papers have assumed that this is the normal outlook and vocabulary of the British, although it can be paralleled in any similar work in the United States.

The book's importance lies in the fact that the author is Frederick Voigt, who is not, as the publisher's blurb states, foreign-affairs editor of the *Manchester Guardian,* but was for long one of their most brilliant and courageous foreign correspondents at a time when political journalism in Europe was at a very high level indeed. The *Manchester Guardian* correspondents repeatedly risked arrest, expulsion, and even death, working with infinitely less resources and backing than the high-pressure reporters of the agencies and the big dailies. The *Guardian's* influence throughout Europe has always been far out of proportion to its circulation and finances. It has always been regarded as the world's leading newspaper for the liberal presentation of foreign affairs.

Voigt was in close contact with the German labor movement, and indeed, the only interesting chapter in *Unto Caesar* is the one on the German Social Democrats. Even here he makes the astounding statement, typical of his present position, that "the strength of the Social Democrat is that he has so little Marxism—his weakness that he has so much." He was in contact also with the German Communists and with those who were to become fascists. It is therefore at first sight astounding that he should be so excessively wrong

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about their psychology. Again and again, he declares that Communists dream of an "apocalypse" of blood and violence, that they are fundamentally bent only upon destruction—are in fact just the "bearded Bolshies" of capitalist fantasy. Yet he must know that this is untrue. He must have seen, by no means only in Germany, that the class war is almost always initiated by the ruling class. He must have understood something of the roots of class hatred in the industrial hovels of the Ruhr. In fact, he did know; his previous work shows it. Then why is he being false to his own knowledge? Few first-rate journalists are that, and even less was it to be expected of a *Guardian* correspondent.

Voigt could not take it. Lenin once defined an anarchist as a "little man driven wild by oppression." I do not think Voigt, to do him justice, would be "driven wild" by oppression of himself, but rather by the spectacle of oppression, of violence and horror. This is becoming increasingly common among English liberals, many of whom believe, for instance, that the Spaniards have just simply gone mad with bloodlust. Yet Voigt fought in the World War and wrote one of the best books on it.

The horror of violence has finally driven these liberals into what is in fact a form of anarchism, in that it cannot accept any discipline. Formerly, they went into the Catholic Church. But that is closed to a man of Voigt's inheritance and past. His religion, though supported by numerous Biblical quotations, does not ring true. It derives chiefly from a personal admiration for Karl Barth and the Protestants resisting Hitler, because they are resisting Hitler, not so much because they are religious. It is perhaps a queer form of intellectual honesty which drives Voigt the whole secular way, into admiration and support of Chamberlain "realism." But, though he hates Hitler even more than he hates Lenin and Stalin, ultimately this position will turn inward from foreign politics and become a form of "Anglo-fascism," just as, in America, isolationism and "the fight against un-Americanism" might well become the disguise for American domestic fascism.

Voigt, by deliberately shutting his eyes to the class basis of fascism, or, in another place, by talking of "a proletariat hungering after private ownership," is already objectively a fascist, for fascism is fundamentally an attack upon the existence of a revolutionary working class. For him, the violence of the class struggle, paradoxically enough, obscures the capacity for seeing its existence.

Voigt's position, therefore, is typical of one section of British liberalism. But it is essential, if one is to understand this and also to understand a much larger body of English liberals whose present stand may be of incalculable importance for the preservation of democracy in Europe, to disassociate the Voigts from the *Manchester Guardian*. Great harm has been done by his publisher's misstatement.

In the last few years, and very especially since the Spanish war, there has been a marked increase of progressive feeling among the English middle class. C. Day Lewis has pointed out the wide success and range of the Left Book Club, especially promising since the reactionary leadership of the Labor Party has stifled the initiative of the local committees. This in turn has forced at least two very important English papers, the *Manchester Guardian* and the *News-Chronicle* into policies further left than they might originally have held. Both are banned in all fascist countries, both welcomed in the USSR. Although sticking to some of the old Manchester School tenets, the *Guardian* has supported the popular-front movement, has been sharply critical of Chamberlain's policies, and, in dealing with the United States, vigorously applauded the Harlan trial. Its tendency is, in fact, just the reverse of its former correspondent's, and while it is not always consistent, it does represent a truly democratic line, that is, a line in which liberty does not mean the Liberty League. Representing a strong current in English liberal thought, it does not indulge in diatribes against Marxism, though it certainly is not Marxist—nor, by any means, are all the readers or writers of the Left Book Club—but it does accept Marxism as a profound, interesting, and vital fact today.

Voigt has perhaps "supped full on horrors" and his stomach has turned. He has come to the conclusion that only by strong armaments can the peace be kept. Although arrived at in a different way, this is precisely the conclusion of the British steelmasters. But perhaps it is unfair to Voigt, who—not seeing that controversy in politics is only one weapon in the struggle, along with the strike, and even, but only if absolutely essential, the barricade—complains that Lenin ravaged his opponents as no Oxford don would think of doing, to quote his last paragraph: "Be ye strong, therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded."

Just like Sokolsky's? MARC FRANK.

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cane where others speak of invention. And yet, to a Marxist, there is surprisingly little illumination in this indispensable and honorable book.

The Krupps are the first industrial concern in Europe to illustrate Lenin's dictum that the state is an executive committee of the governing class. Not even the mercantile East India Co. in the eighteenth century was so wonderfully and fearfully involved with the state as the Krupps with the German imperial and military machine. The Kaisers appear as their caddies, Bismarck as a sulky valet. Yet one thing does not appear. The Krupps for long periods sold abroad more than at home. Their sales were often made directly contrary to the imperial interest. Their treason and their rapacity, both nearly mortally dangerous to the Prussian state, were well known to the high command, the diplomatic service, and openly hinted at in court circles. Yet they were not merely protected but every criticism, every exposure, was turned into an asset. But detailed as is Menne's treatment, the economic reason for this consistent blindness is never clear. For example, the breakdown of Krupp policy in Turkey in 1914 is recited but no reason given why Turkey nevertheless turned its back on French finance and embraced the Krupps, once the war was on. This *non sequitur* is one of a long series. I believe Menne knows the answers but has not thought of presenting them.

There is also an historic emphasis that cannot be sustained. Throughout the book the reader is vividly made aware of everything negative in the growth of the Krupp concern, and unfortunate words such as "luck" and "chance" are over-used. The muckraking tradition weakens our understanding of the immense development of the Krupps as part and parcel of the development of heavy industry in Germany and, so to speak, of the exportation of capitalism from the British Isles to their competitors. That the story is chock-ablock with fraud may be assumed, but it helps us little. The history of British capitalism is incomprehensible without the slave trade, the Elizabethan pirates, land enclosures, etc., but it has provided us with the world in which, regrettably, we live. There seems to be no technical reason why the armament works at Essen so far surpassed the older gunsmiths of England, France, and Belgium. The history of the Krupps seems to take place on a theater floating in a vacuum. There is no vivid picture of the business vis-à-vis its workers except for some racy details of the social funds and the family-patriarchal exploitation policy. But that relation seems nearly static despite the constantly changing circumstances. All these things are mentioned somewhere, but they are skimped.

The book is at its best in dealing with the Krupps before the war. It is really dramatic in the Big Bertha story—and merciless when it describes the mathematical beauty and technical backwardness of that overrated murderess. But it is vague and irrelevant with reference to the post-war inflation policy. Those who have followed the superb analyses of Sternberg on the relation of the astronomical mark-inflation to the reinvestment of fixed capital will understand Krupp's policy; from Menne's book they will learn little. Nor is the relation of Krupp to Thyssen any clearer. The Krupps did not back Hitler. A few contingent associations do not make a story. They would have preferred a Schleicher, above all, a von Papen. Nothing in their experience, in their transfer between executives and the diplomatic and military service, could have made them understand the need of vulgar social demagogy. Hugenberg was their guide and he detested Hitler. Yet he who was last is now first. The Thyssens, Hitler's devil-fathers, are pretty much out and Krupp in. What explains the transfer? Menne shows the contradiction but the tie-up is missing. The Krupps have flourished under Hitler as never before. Menne thinks they were in the secret of the Roehm murders, the June 30, 1934, massacre. Yet he speaks of their will to keep out of politics! This is loosely mentioned as required by their need for exports.

The book, at the end, is out of joint. Its intellectual power, analysis, discovery of underlying social causes run far behind its picturesque and historic achievement. But until a Marxist study appears we can only record our thanks for this much. We are in the same position as we were at the turn of the century when we had to welcome the study of Hobson on capitalist imperialism. But the dull Fabian scythe glinted when polished by Lenin: its cutting power had been unsuspected.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Peasants and Jews in Poland

THE RIVER BREAKS UP, *by I. J. Singer. Translated from the Yiddish by Maurice Samuel. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.*

THIS is a volume of short stories by the author of that extraordinary novel, *The Brothers Ashkenazi,* but the final effect of the book is not so much that of a compilation of stories as of a series of beautifully worked out sketches to be incorporated in a novel. Most of the stories are in themselves unsatisfying, although not one is lacking in the most impressive technical accomplishment. Their view of life is peculiarly limited in scale and mood; there is little in them of conflict, movement, change. And because their subjects are those of profound desolation, brooding inertia, and decay, one especially misses that emotional resolution which the short story is particularly fitted to emphasize. To read each story by itself is like looking at a lifeless kind of picture: populous, colorful, arresting—but motionless. It is only when the book is read and its essence recaptured as a whole that its value is perceived, for Mr. Singer has created a really vast panorama, so powerful in its realistic drawing that the very chaos almost assumes the vitality each unit in it lacks.

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Predominantly stories of peasants and Jews in the still largely medieval civilization of Poland, their theme is one of inhuman suffering and of people for so many years crushed in a hopeless and iron vise that they have themselves become inhuman. Mr. Singer's characters are insensitive to each other's suffering, dreadfully cruel, but even worse, they are deeply incurious and resigned. The cause of their misery is nowhere suggested, nor any cure, nor any possibility that the vigor they express in purposeless violence might take another, creative form. In such a rarely compassionate story as "Clay Pits," in which the little son of a ragpicker is stirred to artistic aspiration by modeling the clay surrounding his home, the brutality of environment has already corrupted the child and he is seen as one bent under a gray and menacing sky, victim of a cosmic fate which cannot be challenged. Mr. Singer writes of caged animals who can never escape the cage, who live only by biting and snarling at each other.

The final story in the book is the only one placed in America. A talented boy realizes that his ambitions as an engineer will be frustrated by racial prejudice; he subsides, with an almost happy resignation, into a career of doctoring up old cars. Nothing changes; the people are cursed by an angry God; that is the implication which, consciously or not, emerges. Not unconnected with the moral and political significance of this defeatism is the esthetic result. Man's artistic importance lies in his struggle with environment. If he does not or cannot struggle, not only is narrative interest lost, but even the most brilliant realism fails in its essential purpose of social clarification.

The greater framework of the novel, or the play *(Yoshe Kalb),* which this writer has hitherto utilized, has an inherent necessity for major conflict and mobile character, disguising such weaknesses as are shown in this book. Considered as parts of a larger whole, these fragments are admirable. Mr. Singer's gifts as a stylist, his power of observation, his eloquence, and his ability swiftly to create atmosphere and character are very impressive. In such stories as "Pearls" and "Old City" (in which he delineates a moldering bourgeoisie more effectively than he does the peasantry), the darkly luminous and evocative clarity he gives to detail are literary equivalents of such paintings as Verneer's.

MARJORIE BRACE.

Home Thoughts From Abroad

BUILDING THE BRITISH EMPIRE, *by James Truslow Adams. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.*

ANYONE who has read *Aunt Polly's Story of Mankind* (and how I pity those who have never chuckled over Donald Ogden Stewart's masterpiece!) will have the clue to James Truslow Adams' mental processes and historical method. A veritable Aunt Polly come to life, Mr. Adams, like his priceless prototype, is committed to the "step forward" concept of history. It is a happy choice; it enables him serenely to dismiss wars, murder singular and *en masse,* conquest, double-dealing, and long centuries of hunger and suffering endured by the exploited hoi-polloi, in brief and casual phrases; why, after all, let such details mar the beautiful panorama of unfolding progress? Especially since progress, it appears, is an exclusive emanation of the British empire?

Yet this book, title and blurb to the contrary notwithstanding, is not really a study of the building of that empire. It is simply another history of England, up to 1783, more inchoate than most such works, at about the intellectual level of high-school sophomores; concerned chiefly with wars, dynasties, and the struggles of rival gangs of racketeers known as kings, dukes, earls, generals, merchant adventurers, and so forth—the sort of history Plutarch wrote, which has been slightly outmoded since J. R. Green wrote his *History of the English People* sixty years ago. The only subject which diverts Mr. Adams now and then from his glorification of monarchs and conquerors who were successful at killing and subjecting other peoples, and his distress over those who failed in this mission which God appointed for the English, is the growth of the power of Parliament. On this point he is interesting, but his attitude of open-mouthed and goggle-eyed admiration leads of course only to bewilderment and darkness.

For Mr. Adams is quite honest. For instance, he frankly discards the fiction that the Magna Charta was a "charter of liberties" for any but the privileged classes. And with respect to English conquest and rule in Ireland he does not conceal its ruthless character. But he is also often ignorant, frequently forgetful, and always naive. The Welsh, Scots, and Irish were comparative savages, hopelessly backward, employed exclusively in anarchic civil wars, and the English just had to take them over for their own good, don't y' know? The fact is (as one need go no further than Mr. Adams' pages to learn) that the English nobles were just as busy cutting each other's throats as the Gaelic and Cymric chieftains, while the English masses were far more ignorant, starveling, and degraded than the Irish, Scots, or Welsh clansmen—but this latter fact you would not learn from Mr.

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Adams. As early as the thirteenth century, he believes, the Irish had already lost their ancient culture; he does not seem to know that in the late sixteenth century Raleigh and Spenser found that culture still flourishing. Forgetfulness and naivete combine when, on page 383, our historian notes that the Irish had mustered eighty thousand fully armed volunteers to demand parliamentary independence, yet on the next page he goes into ecstasies over the spectacle of the English granting the Irish demands "ungrudgingly." One can only admire the tact with which he omits to mention that by beguiling Grattan into allowing the appointment of the administrative bureaucracy to remain with the English Cabinet, the latter were enabled to destroy Irish legislative independence within eighteen years. The grand triumph of naiveté, however, is Mr. Adams' account of how the English acquired India. They were simply the innocent victims of circumstances, who never dreamt of exploiting the 300,000,000 people of the peninsula, and were quite annoyed to find that job on their hands. It is regrettable that Mr. Adams mars this pretty picture by a few casual references to "loot."

Certain embarrassing occurrences between 1770 and 1782 are viewed by Mr. Adams as you would expect; what grosser minds call the First American Revolution was of course just an unfortunate civil war among the sea-divided English people (note: more than half of Washington's armies were non-English), which time, happily, is undoing.

But I have erred. The real cream of Mr. Adams' naiveté is his attitude toward the economic factor in history. Six or eight times in his 413 pages he concedes minor importance to economic conditions, such as an increase of 1,600 percent in the cost of living, the theft of the common lands from the people by the nobles, constantly deepening poverty, or the decline of Ypres from one hundred thousand to five thousand population when England began to manufacture cloth instead of exporting raw wool. A line is given to the fact that Ket's proletarian rebellion could only be subdued by foreign mercenaries; and after describing the treachery and savagery with which Wat Tyler's starving followers were massacred, Mr. Adams goes into raptures over English tolerance and restraint. "The horrors of a French Revolution, of the *present regime in Russia*" (italics mine) "would be unthinkable," Mr. Adams is sure, "in English history at almost any period."

This is indeed such a book as might be expected from a writer who in his introduction traces the greatness of England to the fact that aged *rentiers* adopt prisoners as their "special charges" to the extent of visiting their cells to talk platitudes, and that "At tea in a country house, you will hear local cases discussed—perhaps illness, poverty, or a young Communist whom someone has been talking to, trying to teach him something of the English system." Take heart, ye prisoners of starvation, your cases are being discussed at tea in country houses! SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

ART

He forgot to wash his face, but he used to come to art class in rubbers to hide the holes in his stockings. He spits a denial at you now if you call him a sissy artist.

Many so-called tough boys and girls of Greater New York, recruited from East Side and Harlem slums, from reform schools and penitentiaries, gave an up-to-date performance of the lives of *Dead End* kids in the Citywide Children's Arts Festival put on last week in Central Park Mall by the Public Use of Arts Committee. They were the children in the free art classes of the Federal Arts Project.

The sculpture displayed was that of artists who love their medium. Many of the smallest pieces somehow had the massiveness of big statues, solid, rounded, molded out of something the children loved to touch. The young artists displayed no compulsion to copy "nature." They used every detail to convey an impression by the treatment of the surface, perception of just that muscle of the face which creates a distinctive impression, by emphasizing without false modesty those parts of the body important to their artistic conception.

Their mass demonstration revealed an execution that was swift, sustained, relieved of over-emphasis on small technical problems, that transformed in a moment a lump of clay into something provocative and distinctive. If there were outside influences, they neither crushed nor corrupted the sense of values and of humor belonging to the child.

Older artists might envy the unimpeded observation of their paintings. Though their mastery of technique was advanced for their years, the significant thing was the degree of simplicity with which they were able to express themselves. Their free choice of subject matter with social significance, their accuracy and imagination all pointed to the dawn of a new attitude toward art, cultivated and fruitful in the children, ready to be transplanted in the public at large.

Creation of works of art seemed a serious part of their lives, arising out of life itself, whether of the mind or of the outside world—something that must be direct and unconcealed in purpose to mean anything. Here was an art that called for all their resources of character—not a special inspired effort, but a concentrated earnest drive, a painstaking treatment, an unrelaxing outpouring of energy. Out of such lack of inhibition came a product neither naive nor sophisticated but sane and balanced. And the work of the more advanced students was more indisputably beautiful and saner than that of the beginners.

This is the reason that art classes for children have become indispensable in the psychiatric department at Bellevue under the leadership of Dr. Loretta Bender. This is the

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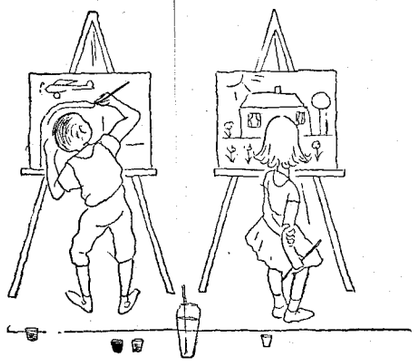

John Mackey

reason that the prejudices and stereotypes of capitalist society are conspicuously absent from the paintings of the freely creative child.

The work in general bore the mark of the student rather than the imprint of the teacher's technique. Work of a single class varied wholesomely. This originality, pointing to the absorption of the child in the program of his art class, marks a milestone in the history of progressive education, which has long recognized that the more the student enters into the process, the better the education. There is no wonder that the art classes, with their rich promise for the development of people educated in the social sense—as well rounded human beings—have so much to contribute to child welfare in those sections of community life where youngsters are exposed to vicious social influences.

MARCIA MINOR.

MOVIES

IF THE Soviet film tribute to the heroic builders of Komsomolsk, *City of Youth,* were half as impressive as the city itself, the Cameo might be drawing happier crowds. Joshua Kunitz says it is a perfectly true picture of the roaring spirits of these young Communists at work on a city of their own. He has seen one of these youth cities in the Arctic. I haven't. The picture didn't give me enough details or feeling of the task to enjoy their triumph as fully.

As part of the Far Eastern defense plan, hundreds of young Communists were sent to the banks of the broad Amur three years ago to bring out of the wooded *taiga* an industrial city where ships might be built, which would serve as a supply base for Blücher's Red Army of the East. In a combination of documentary shots taken during stages of building and a plot enacted by professional actors, S. Gerasimov, the director, has failed to catch the epic of Komsomolsk. He has recorded the patient tenacity of the builders, their discouragements, the sexual adjustments, the plots of saboteurs, and Soviet triumph at the end, but the sense

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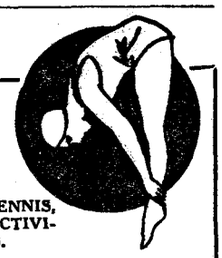

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of magnificent achievement, the suspense of the work itself is missing. Dovchenko's great film, *Ivan,* considers a young peasant who goes to work on Dnieprostroy; it also shows the obstacles of learning a job and getting something done in a Bolshevik way. In *Ivan* the camera arouses great excitement by a lyric exposition of the actual labor. This feeling is missing from *City of Youth.*

The film celebrates a great Socialist victory on the Amur; the Soviet masses can rightfully break into hurrahs during the ceremony at the end of the picture. Unfortunately for the lay American the picture does not do the work justice. However, you should go to see in blank surprise the great city of Komsomolsk built in the wilderness by these young pioneers of the USSR.

WARNER BROTHERS in their muckraking mood send a robust color film laid among the California redwoods—*The Valley of the Giants,* from a book by Peter B. Kyne. Members of the Warner stock company—and a Warner player is just that (witness Frank McHugh's appearance locally in *Four Daughters, Boy Meets Girl,* and this one in the same month)—are handsome foil for the silent and majestic trees. Designs on the big sticks are entertained by Charles Bickford, captain of an Eastern plunderbund. Wayne Morris, who wants to preserve the trees for posterity, rallies the locals against the grand larceny. Outbreaks of extra-legal violence—burning a land office, destroying a logging trestle, and dynamiting a dam—mark the proceedings. I note the gradual disappearance of hurrah-for-the-vigilantes! in these Western pulp films, notably those of Warner Brothers. As in *Gold Is Where You Find It* the passions of the wronged faction are checked beyond the breaking point by the script writers.

Claire Trevor in the Kansas City Lou role is a wide-open eyeful. Alan Hale, as a Paul Bunyanesque logger, challenges the boys at the bar in a ranting speech which might well be found in *Caleb Catlum's America,* for all its frontier bombast. Bickford and Morris grapple in an elegant scrap on top of the doomed dam, but unless the last named young man learns to punch lines as well as he does heads, he is headed back to a lonely life on the cinema range.

SINCE Spencer Tracy first entered Holy Orders as the priest in *San Francisco* it followed Hollywood habit patterns to have him do Father Flanagan, the Nebraska priest who established a community for delinquent boys out in the cornfields. *Boys Town* is the picture, with Mickey Rooney, the picture snatcher, embodying the worst part of the youth problem in Boys Town. Master Rooney is a zealous if untamed mime; give him an inch of celluloid and he'll take a mile. He runs the gamut from A to Z-plus. Mrs. Rooney's little boy has projection.

Road to Life, the Soviet success of a few years back, concerns the same problem—the little savages of the city streets. In the USSR

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of the first Five Year Plan, these *bezprizornys* were herded in their cellars and sent off to institutions in the country where they had their own workshops and their own community. In America the same kids from the raw edges of industrial society are not a direct concern of the state; their reclamation is left to the limited efforts of such idealists as Father Flanagan. The similarity between the two pictures is amazing. Almost scene-for-scene parallels may be found: the anxiety of the administrators that none of the youths take a runout powder; the symbol of death as a unifying force in the community; the democracy of the group; and the racial harmony that occurs as a commonplace. *Boys Town* begins by patiently explaining these attributes in near-documentary fashion. Once the scene is laid—young Mickey, consigned to Boys Town by his conscience-stricken gangster brother, young Mickey raising merry hell with the Sunday School aspects of the place—the script suddenly explodes into fearful gangster stuff. The kid is shot by his own brother in a bank robbery; the young citizenry marches on a very conveniently situated gangster hideout (it appears to be located just across the highway), smashing the place to kindling, and even gentle Father Flanagan catches a mobster on the button with a neat right hook. The project has been on the rocks financially and this climax resolves everything dramatically, but not, I might add, sociologically. Father Flanagan is enabled to expand Boys Town for the many more boys who will continue to come; he will keep doctoring wayward youth but never cure the conditions that cause them. *Road To Life* was a picture about the beginning of a youth-reclamation project in the Soviet Union—a nationwide program, I remind you—and one that has since become unnecessary. Society quit making kids like that in the USSR. In all fairness, the Russian film also had the kids invading a nest of thieves and prostitutes who were their former associates. The big bustup was not the solution of the whole problem, however. Socialism, not a single well-intentioned priest, was tackling the question.

But I shouldn't cavil with *Boys Town* because it wasn't made in the Soviet Union. It is a friendly, democratic picture which stresses interdependence and good citizenship. The Jewish boy, Moe, and the Italian lad, Tony, the Protestant waifs, and the Faithful live in brotherhood and democracy, even if their town is an ivory tower in acres of slums. *Boys Town* depicts the therapy of embryo criminals in the USA almost as eloquently as *Road To Life* did for the street arabs of the USSR. If it fails to match the depth of the Communist film, the difference will be found in the difference between capitalism and Socialism.

Until the gangster guns rattle, the picture is quite unusual. You'll like the kids and admire the tenacity of Father Flanagan. You will also wish that Father Flanagan had a whole social system to back up his work.

JAMES DUGAN.

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